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ABSTRACT

Third in a series of annotated bibliographies designed to help teachers and librarians locate stories and lore on cultures and topics not easily accessible, this sourcebook presents five annotated bibliographies of traditional literature that has not previously been systematically collected. Each selection in the sourcebook contains an introduction to the topic, a list of references, and an annotated bibliography. Two of the five selections deal with Pacific Island cultures; one is on a special folklore character from the Philippines; and two are on special topics with stories found worldwide. The selections in the sourcebook are: (1) "The Night Marchers" (Nori L. K. Leong); (2) "Niue: History and Folk Culture" (Cynthia S. Ichioka); (3) "The Tianak" (Beryl Ripp); (4) "Mermaids in Folk Literature" (Marcia J. Kemble); and (5) "Riddling in Folk Narratives" (Melode Reinker). (RS)

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STORIES FROM AROUND THE WORLD

AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY OF FOLK LITERATURE

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Honolulu, Hawaii
1992

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University of Hawaii
School of Library and Information Studies
1992

STORIES FROM AROUND THE WORLD

An Annotated Bibliography of Folk Literature

This is the third in a series of annotated bilbiographies with introductory essays that were compiled by students in Traditional Literature and Oral Narrative classes at the School of Library and Information Studies, University of Hawaii at Manoa, Honolulu, Hawaii. Previous bibliographies were compiled in 1986 and 1988.

As planet Earth becomes increasingly a global village, interest grows in the culture of peoples whose traditional literature has not been systematically collected or is not easily accessible to teachers and librarians. For example, Pacific Island cultures, rich though they are in literature and lore, have been studied by specialists whose work is not well known by educators.

Two of the five bibliographies in this collection deal with Pacific Island cultures, one is on a special folklore character from the Philippines, and two are on special topics with stories found worldwide.

Nori L.K. Leong has researched a topic that is familiar to residents of Hawaii but is little known outside of the Islands. Her bibliography is on the Night Marchers *(Huaka'i po)*, ghosts of ancient Hawaiian gods and warriors.

Cynthia Ichioka writes about Niue, one of the lesser known islands of Polynesia. She gathers her information from resources and Niuean documents

in the Pacific Collection at Hamilton Library, University of Hawaii at Manoa, the Bishop Museum Library, and the Hawaii State Public Library System.

Tianaks, shapeshifting dwarfs of the Philippines, are the subject of Beryl Ripp's bibliography. She examines the Spanish influence on a legendary personna of pre-European Philippine culture.

Marcia J. Kemble chose a more global topic in her study of Mermaids in Folk Literature. Her bibliography is a useful source of information about origins, symbolism, and beliefs about mermaids as well as an excellent guide to the location of tales.

Riddles fascinate children. Melode Reinker collected riddles in folk narratives from a wide variety of cultures.

Each selection contains an introduction to the topic and an annotated bibliography. The contributors hope this sourcebook will be helpful to teachers and librarians seeking stories and lore on cultures and topics not easily accessible to them.

Therese Bissen Bard

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The Night Marchers

By
Nori L.K. Leong

The Night Marchers

Mo'olelo is the Hawaiian term used for relating stories of the gods, local legends, family stories, or tales. It is the most popular form of storytelling surviving today. Many stories deal with ghosts or the supernatural, "commonly called *kahuna* in Hawaiian, *obake* in Japanese, and "chicken-skin," or ghost stories, in English" (Kikuchi 1976, 157).

Ghosts are a favorite topic of conversation everywhere, enthralling all ages and ethnic groups. Hawaii is no exception. People in Hawaii often just "talk story" by relating a tale they have heard, that has happened to them, or been experienced by someone they know. Thus, many of the Hawaiian tales have become part of the people's cultural heritage. Blending with this is the influence of the various ethnic groups that came to Hawaii; each one adding a layer of their ethnicity. The result has been "the creolized tales that are the legends of 20th-century Hawaii" (Kikuchi 1976, 157). As Glen Grant, collector of supernatural stories and gifted storyteller of the "Ghosts of Old Honolulu" walking tour states, "Everyone knows at least one ghost story and usually shares it" (Grant 1990).

The Hawaiian culture is rich in the lore of spirits. In the Hawaiian philosophy of life, the spirit or soul *(uhane)* is disassociated from the body

(kino) and has an independent life apart from the body (Beckwith 1970, 144). Without the *uhane*, the body is lifeless, either dead, asleep, in a faint, or just listless and drowsy. When the spirit wanders away from the body, it exits from the inner angle of the eye *(lua-uhane)* and reenters through the big toe. The spirit could take many forms. It could inhabit a bone or rock, take the shape of a cloud or animal, be felt as a cold wind, or be heard in an animal's cry. The *uhane* are everywhere. This concept is metaphorically expressed by Pukui, Haertig, and Lee as:

> Unexplainable? Yes. But quite natural and even expected. For in old Hawaii, man and gods and nature were very close, and the curtain between living and dead was woven of cobwebs.
>
> The curtain is still cobweb thin (Pukui, Haertig, and Lee 1972, 195).

Thus, family ties were not broken by death. The Hawaiians believed that the spirits would reappear at the places they frequented while alive and that they would appear in the form that they had when alive.

In Hawaii, the night marchers are a part of the rich cultural fabric woven out of legend, superstition, folklore, and the reality of personal narratives of someone's experience. The night marchers, Huaka'i po (*huaka'i*=procession; *po* = night), are the phantom legendary spirits who march during their earthly visitations. They are also called *'oi'o*, or the procession of ghosts.

According to Luomala, in earlier times, processions were numerous

for Hawaiian dignitaries. A herald often accompanied a procession to command people to get out of the way. If the principal marcher was of very high rank, the people had to prostrate themselves *(kapu moe)* or, if of lower rank, to squat down *(kapu noho)* (Luomala 1983, 4). The most sacred were carried in litters *(maneles)* so their feet would not touch the ground and make it forbidden *(kapu)*. A chief whose face was sacred *(alo kapu)* was at the head of the march; if his back was sacred *(akua kapu)* he took up the rear of the procession. If he was protected in life, he marched between the warriors. Kapu breakers were punished by death. Such rules and behavior were also observed for the spectral marchers of the *huaka'i po*.

If one met the night marchers and could not get out of the way in time, one should take off one's clothes and lie face up. Hopefully, one would be saved by an ancestor *(aumakua)* in the procession. If one did not have time to strip, one should sit still and close one's eyes. The guard at the front or rear would kill you unless one's *aumakua* intervened. As one part-Hawaiian woman related to me:

> My uncle in Kohala was returning home after a party. Something picked him up and pushed him away. He found himself in a tree. He had been drinking and didn't know how he got up there. When he told this to his friends, they all told him, "You are lucky. Your *aumakua* must have saved you."

Those who took part in the march were the chiefs and warriors who had died, the *aumakua*, and the gods, each of whom had their own march

(Pukui and Beckwith 1930, 282). In the chiefs' march, there may be the sound of drums, the nose flute, other instruments, or silence, depending on what the chief enjoyed in life. If there were torches, they would not be as bright as the gods or *aumakuas*. A few *aumakua* marched with the chiefs to protect their living decendants who might encounter the marchers. Music and chanting accompany the march of the *aumakua* of each district. They carry candlenut *(kukui)* torches which shine even in the rain or daylight. They are followed by whirlwinds and the words *"kapu o moe!"* are shouted to warn people to get out of the way and prostrate themselves.

The march of the gods *(akua)* is longer, brighter and more sacred. It can often be seen from far away. The only music is the chanter, chanting their names and their deeds. Accompanying them are heavy rain, mist, thunder and lightning or stormy seas. The torches shine red. Five, the *ku a lima,* carry bigger torches, at the beginning, at three points within the procession and at the rear. They walk six abreast, three males and three females. Their route is littered with broken tree branches and leaves as their heads are sacred and nothing should be above them.

They usually march at night, between sunset and dawn. However, if it's a procession to welcome the spirit of a dying relative, they may march by day. They march on various nights according to Luomala:

> The marches are most often on Po Kane, nights between the 27th and the 29th sacred to the god Kane. Other nights for phantom

> marchers are the 29th, sacred to Lono; nights between the 24th and the 26th . . . sacred to Kaloa (Kanaloa); two of Ku's nights when the moon is still new; and Akua's the 14th when the moon is distinctly round. Usually the processions are observed when the moon is either waning or new (Luomala 1983, 14-15).

They often march to escort and guide a spirit to the afterworld. Sometimes, they march to a heiau or a gathering ground for a celebration. They often frequent those places with which they were familiar while living, wearing the same clothing they wore in life.

Following a traditional path, they often do not deviate and may go right through modern developments such as stone walls, houses, or cars. Their paths are very well set and definite. An example is this story told by Glen Grant on his ghost tour, as related to him by a young man.

> The night marchers went right through a bedroom of a house in Papakolea. For two weeks, every night, this man's father-in-law, who was pure Samoan, spoke Japanese, Chinese, Hawaiian and English. He sat up all night long talking in tongues. He passed away after two weeks. The son-in-law never thought the death had anything to do with the supernatural until two years later when he was at the Bureau of Land and Conveyances. He was looking at an 1880's map charting his property when he saw a dotted line going through his property. He asked what it was. They told him, "Oh, don't worry about that, that's just superstition. It's an old night marcher's path. The old surveyors use to mark them on maps." He put his house map on the old map and the line went right through his father-in-law's bedroom. They [the marchers] had taken him with them (Grant 1990).

Another resident of Kaneohe shared that the marchers still follow their old path through her parents' property:

> The path goes through my parents', brother's, and sister's homes and my neighbor's bedroom, through Kiahala stream, crosses up Lilipuna, or red hill. Below the tip of the mountain is a ceremony

ground. They're building a subdivision there. There's a platform of something there for their celebration. We hear music. We've known about this since we were kids. There are drums and flutes. When we heard them, they [parents] would tell us*"kulekule"* (don't think about, don't bother) and ignore.

There is a home facing toward the Marine Station and things were coming through their bedroom. They [neighbors] have moved away.

They march always at night and the music is soft and sweet. It's different. If you put all your attention to it [music], it gets soft. It's always on a moon lit night, no dogs barking. When you look out, you don't see them.

My father has seen the torches. He is from Kohala and they have a lot there. The story goes from generation to generation. My father knows a lot about these things.

The trail can be moved by a *kahuna* [high priest]. If they are sensitive enough, they know of the trail and can bless a new one.

On the Big Island, they often have one-car accidents. One car-accidents are unusual. Usually the Hawaiians who know say that the person had a heart attack or got scared and smashed their car after seeing the marchers.

Some people can see the ghostly procession while others just hear them or feel a strange movement. In one account by Antoinette Withington, a Hawaiian man related that one had to "be right in her--laying his hand upon his heart--to see a procession" (Withington 1937, 134). Another account recorded by Withington tells of a young girl who could not see them on one occasion and then could on the next. In fact, she spoke to them, telling them who her ancestors were. She claims to have walked along with them a little way. Tales of the living actually marching with the *huaka i po* are rare. However, I shall quote one related by Glen Grant as part of his "Ghosts of Old Honolulu" walking tour:

> One man told me his parents moved into a house that was right directly in the path of the night marchers. The path pointed right at them. The neighbor from next door, an old Hawaiian lady came down and told his father quite sincerely, "Bless this house. Bless it for yourselves. You should not be in this house. No one should have built this house. The dead come marching right through it. Well, my father told her we were Christians. We don't believe in the old pagan religion. My father would not do anything to protect us.
>
> Months later, the old lady came knocking on our door at about 8:30. I was home alone with my sister. My parents were out. I came to the door. "They've got your sister. I warned your father. My God, they're taking her away from you." I told her my sister was in the bedroom sleeping. She said, "Look!" Walking away from us into the woods like this [demonstrates with right arm raised over head] as if something had her by the hand. Something big was leading her away. I was so terrified I couldn't move. The old woman had to pick me up and carry me and make me touch my sister with my hand. She said only my blood could save her. My sister fainted. She was sick. She had chills. We brought her back to the house. My father came home. I told him, "She was out on the dead path." My father listened and never said a word to me. He took her to the doctor. They took care of my sister.
>
> Two days later, when I returned home from school, there were ti leaves planted around the house by my father. The dead never came through our house again. (Grant 1990)

Sightings of these ghostly apparitions have occurred throughout Hawaiian history and still occur today. Accounts, both published and unpublished, have surfaced for the last ninety years from people who reportedly have encountered these phantom marchers. They have been reported on all the main islands, Kaua'i, Maui, Moloka'i, O'ahu, and Hawai'i (Luomala 1983, 1).

To the Hawaiians, and many of the local people of the islands, the night marcher processions are always viewed with respect. Many consider them sacred. Some feel that the experiences should only be told to trusted

family and friends. Those who should not be told include newspaper reporters, television interviewers, neighborhood gossips and people who doubt (Apple 1973, 11[A]).

Very little has been published on these phantom marchers (Luomala 1983, 2). Many of the stories still exist only in the oral tradition. The stories are often shared orally and there it has remained. There is a need for someone to collate them and write these personal narratives down, but it has to be done right (Grant 1990).

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Includes basic information about the night marchers. Mentions historical views and consequences of seeing these phantom marchers. Describes the procession and the Hawaiians' belief in spirits.

Aquino, Hope, and Janie Gonsalves. "Night Marchers. . . A Myth, A Legend, A Reality." Imua I Ke Kumu: Wai'anae High School Project 1 (March 1979): 18-22.

Discusses night marchers and spirits. Includes two stories of the night marchers coming to see the people of Wai'anae. One story is about a girl who is visited by three Hawaiian spirits; the other is about a group of Wai'anae students who have a supernatural experience.

Baldwin, Helen S. "Ghosts Walk the Ancient Trails" Hawaii Tribune Herald: The Orchid Isle, 20 January 1974, 21.

Relates stories of the old Hawaiian around the island coastal trail. Focuses on the account of a Puna resident who encountered the night marchers.

Beckwith, Martha. Hawaiian Mythology. Hawaii: University of Hawaii Press, 1970.

Describes the procession of gods and spirits, "Marchers of the night" *(Huaka'i po)* or "Spirit ranks" *(Oi'o)*. Relates the reason for the march, "music", processional, and what to do if one "sees" a procession (page 164). Mentions the phantom dog army of Maui on page 343. Includes sections on the gods, children of the gods, the chiefs, Hawaiian mythology and heroes and lovers in fiction. Includes references and index.

Berkey, Helen Lamar. The Secret Cave of Kamanawa. Tokyo: Charles & Tuttle, Co., 1968.

The tale of a secret burial cave of an old Hawaiian *ali'i* (chief) provides the adventure for "Boy" McFarlane and the Cat-Woman. A chapter within the story is devoted to Boy's sighting of the night marchers.

Borg, Jim. "Haunted Homes: Is Barking Sands a Gateway to Hawaiian Afterlife?" The Honolulu Advertiser, 11 November 1985, sec. A, p. 3.

Reports by a family and people who live in the area of a white lady, ghost cattle, and other hauntings. Describes the odd goings-on. Discusses the night marchers and *"leina a ka uhane,"* the place spirits leap into the netherworld.

Day, A. Grove, and Bacil F. Kirtley. Horror in Paradise: Grim and Uncanny Tales from Hawaii and the South Seas. Honolulu: Mutual Publishing Co., 1986.

Contains various stories dealing with spirits, the supernatural, or ghosts. Contains a mixture of stories based on fact and fiction. Includes a story about the night marchers by Mary Pukui and Martha Beckwith.

de Fries, Emma. "Malo-Clad Warriors Scare Off Workers." The Sunday Star-Bulletin & Advertiser, 31 October 1971, sec. C., p. 4.

Two stories, told to her by her grandfather. One relates the experience of Chinese laborers with the night marchers; the other of being spared bad luck by a lady in white.

Gay, Roland L. Hawaii, Tales of Yesteryear: A Collection of Legends & Stories. Hawaii: Roland L. Gay, 1977.

A collection of family stories (Roland Gay's mother was pure Hawaiian), personal experiences and less familiar early Hawaiian legends which the author shared during his popular Hawaiian Dinner

Hour on a local radio station. Contains twenty-three stories. Two are about the night marchers (Mysterious Riders on the Ridge, The Ghosts of Kalamaula).

Hoyt, Helen P. The Night Marchers. Hawaii: Island Heritage, Ltd., 1976.

Huaka'ipo, the Marchers of the Night, are included within a modern story, as related by an old man from Wai'anae. Reference is made to the Shark God, Kuaihelani (afterworld) and various Hawaiian-customs/superstitions. Included in the second part of book is: visit to the spirit land, customs relating to the dead, Hawaiian ghost testing, soul after death, marching in the night, Kaumakakaulaula (ancient temple), some Hawaiian beliefs regarding spirits, and three night marcher stories.

Ii, John Papa. Fragments of Hawaiian History. Bernice P. Bishop Museum Special Publication 70. Translated by Mary Kawena Pukui. Honolulu: Bishop Museum Press, 1983.

A compilation of the writings of Hawaiian scholar, John Papa Ii. Relates Hawaiian history and early Hawaiian life under the Kamehamehas. Describes a night marcher procession and two *loku*, places where people and spirits gathered to enjoy themselves (p. 64, 76). Includes table of contents, glossary, and index.

Kamakau, Samuel M. Ka Po'e Kahiko: The People of Old. Bernice P. Bishop Museum Special Publication 51. Translated by Mary Kawena Pukui. Honolulu: Bishop Museum Press, 1964.

Hawaiian scholar, Samuel M. Kamakau documents the daily activities of Hawaiian life. Based on a series of articles written for the Hawaiian-language newspaper, these writings provide insight into Hawaiian society. The focus is on the spiritual and religious aspects of the society. A whole chapter is devoted to "The Spirit World." The lights of the night marchers are mentioned on page 80. Includes table of contents, detailed end notes, glossary, literature cited, and index.

Luomala, Katharine. "Phantom Night Marchers in the Hawaiian Islands." Pacific Studies, Fall 1983, 1-3.

Comprehensive study of the night marchers. Examines

processions in Hawaiian culture and the phantom processions. Analyzes the observers' identity and evidence, marchers' identity and time and place of marching, observers' behavior and reaction, listeners' reaction, and the functions of narratives and beliefs about phantom marchers. Includes published and unpublished information and author's personal collection gathered from her folklore classes at the University of Hawaii. Detailed end notes.

Malo, David. Hawaiian Antiquities (Mo olelo Hawaii), 2d ed. Translated by Nathaniel B. Emerson. Honolulu: Bishop Museum Press, 1951.

David Malo, Hawaiian scholar, writes about a wide variety of subjects. A wealth of information on the ancient Hawaiian beliefs and practices. Contains several references to the night marchers and spirits (pp.32, 114, 115, 152). Contains table of contents, detailed foot notes and index.

Paki, Pilahi. Legends of Hawaii: Oahu's Yesterday. Hawaii: Victoria Publishers, 1972.

A history through legends book about the battles, romances, travels and deeds of ancient Hawaii. Emphasizes name-translations, literally, descriptively, and esoterically. Contains thirty seven poems, chants and legends. Includes three references to the night marchers (pp. 17, 23, 60).

Poire, Napua Stevens. "Night Marchers Scared Her." The Sunday Star-Bulletin & Advertiser, 31 October 1971, sec. C, p. 7.

Story of Napua Stevens Poire's encounter, as a child, with the *"ka huaka'i o ka po,"* the night marchers. Includes Hawaiian customs and superstitions.

Pukui, Mary Kawena, E. W. Haerti, and Catherine A. Lee. Nana I Ke Kumu (Look to the Source) Volume I. Honolulu: Queen Liliuokalani Children's Center, 1972.

Provides factual information, clarifies Hawaiian concepts and examines their applicability in modern life. Discusses customs and culture of Hawaii. Includes information on the supernatural, visions, and the ritual of death. Mentions night marchers on page 22. Includes Hawaiian topic index and reference guide, detailed end notes, bibliography, and English topic index and reference guide.

Rohter, Sharlene. "Strange Encounters of Da Kine." Aloha (The Magazine of Hawaii), (May/June 1980): 64-69.

A collection of supernatural stories of Hawaii. Includes local superstition of the Pali, pork, Old Pali Road, supernatural stones, healing stones, volcano tales, shark God, night marchers, menehunes, and various other tidbits of island customs and lore.

Taylor, Lois. "Hawaiian Spook Stories." Honolulu Star-Bulletin, 31 October 1972, sec. F, p. 1.

Collection of ghost stories from Ruby Johnson (teacher of Hawaiian Studies at the University of Hawaii) and the Honolulu Police Department. Stories are believed to be true. Contains two tales about night marcher sightings.

Thrum, Thomas G., comp. Hawaiian Folk Tales: A Collection of Native Legends. Folcroft, PA: Folcroft Library Editions, 1976.

Refers to the location of the Lua O Milu (the nether world) and the procession of Oi'o (spirits) in one of the myths. Describes precautions one should take upon encountering an Oi'o. Elaboration of where ghosts dwell. Contains twenty-five tales. Includes glossary.

Westervelt, William D. Hawaiian Legends of Ghosts and Ghost-Gods. Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle Company, Inc., 1963.

Describes the types of ghosts, the netherworld, and the homes of the spirits. Prayers, sounds made by ghosts, body disposal and sites in the islands that were frequented by the spirits. Contains eighteen legends relating to ghosts. Appendix relates information about the Honolulu Aquarium, Bishop Museum, Polynesian language, Hawaiian names, *meles*, and the hula.

Withington, Antoinette. Hawaiian Tapestry. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1937.

Using the story-narrative mode, the author describes the social life and customs of old Hawaii. Included is a chapter, "The Drums", which relates the author's conversations with the people about night marchers. Contains keen insight into the traditions of the people.

NIUE

History and Folk Culture

By
Cynthia S. Ichioka

NIUE
HISTORY AND FOLK CULTURE

Niue is one of the lesser known islands of Polynesia. Many books on Oceania refer to Niue but do not present much information on the island and its people.

Throughout its history, Niue has been known by many names. The *tupua* (god) Huanaki is supposed to have given the following names to the land: Nukutu-taha which means a lonely island; Motu-te-fua[1], a desolate barren land; Fakahoa-motu because the unfinished work of Fao (another god) was completed by Huanaki; and Nuku-tuluea (Pulekula 1983, 99). When the natives gave Captain James Cook a warlike reception, he named the island Savage Island. Niueans dislike this term; they feel their ancestors were merely keeping outsiders from landing so they would not bring any diseases to the island (Smith 1983, 86). Around the turn of the century, the island was called Niue Fekai, but today it is simply called Niue.

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[1]In the Niuean language, g is used for the /ng/sound, ti is pronounced /tsi/or /si/, and te is pronounced /tse/or /se/.

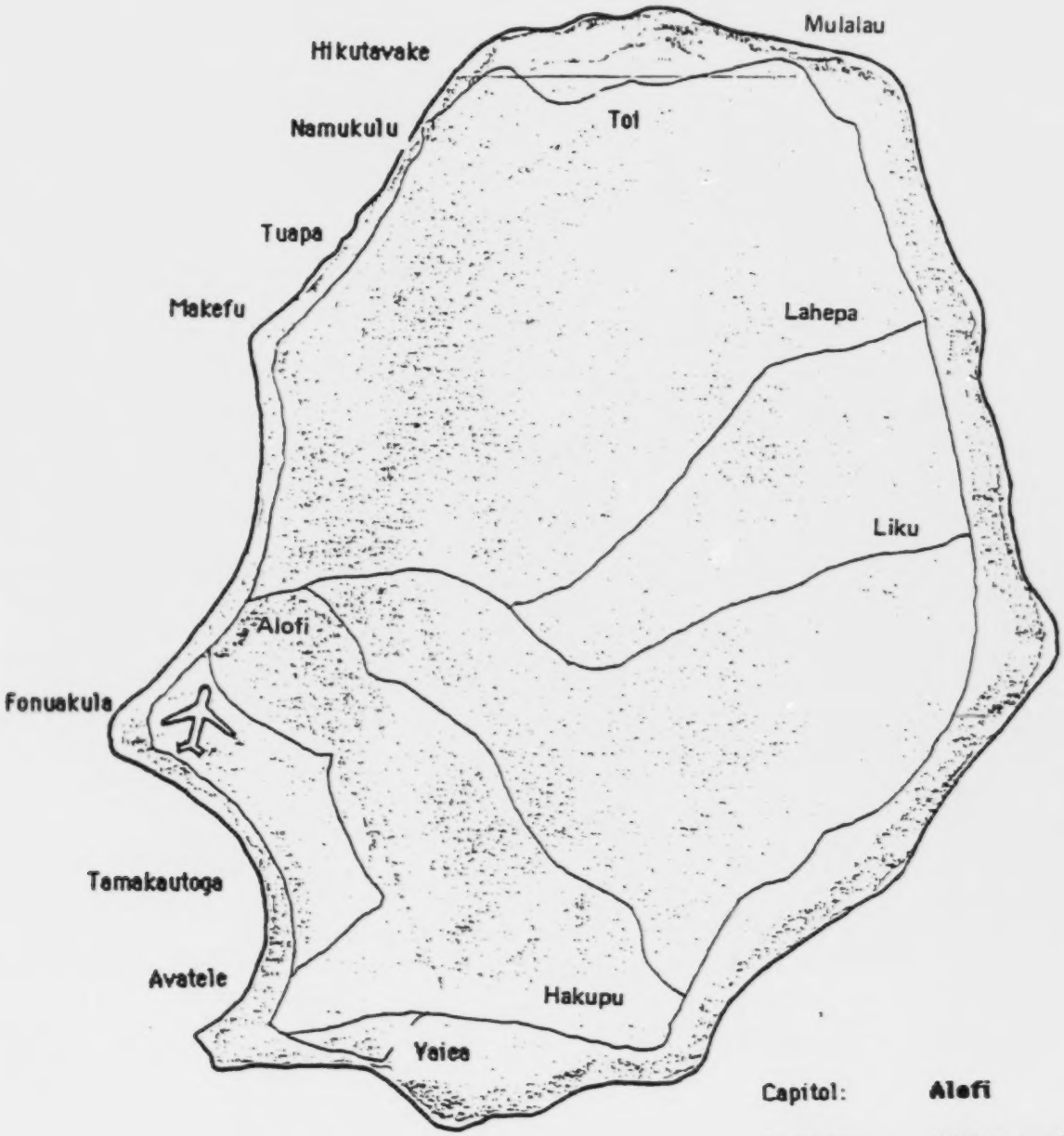
The purpose of this paper is to present a brief overview of the history of Niue and its people and a selected bibliography on background information and folk literature. This list was limited to readily available sources from the University of Hawaii Hamilton Library, the Hawaii State Public Library System, and the Bishop Museum Library.

GEOGRAPHY

Niue is a small, 100 square mile island in Eastern Polynesia. It stands by itself 19º south of the equator. Its closest neighbors are Tonga, 480 km to the southwest, Samoa, 560 km northwest, and Rarotonga, 980 km southeast.

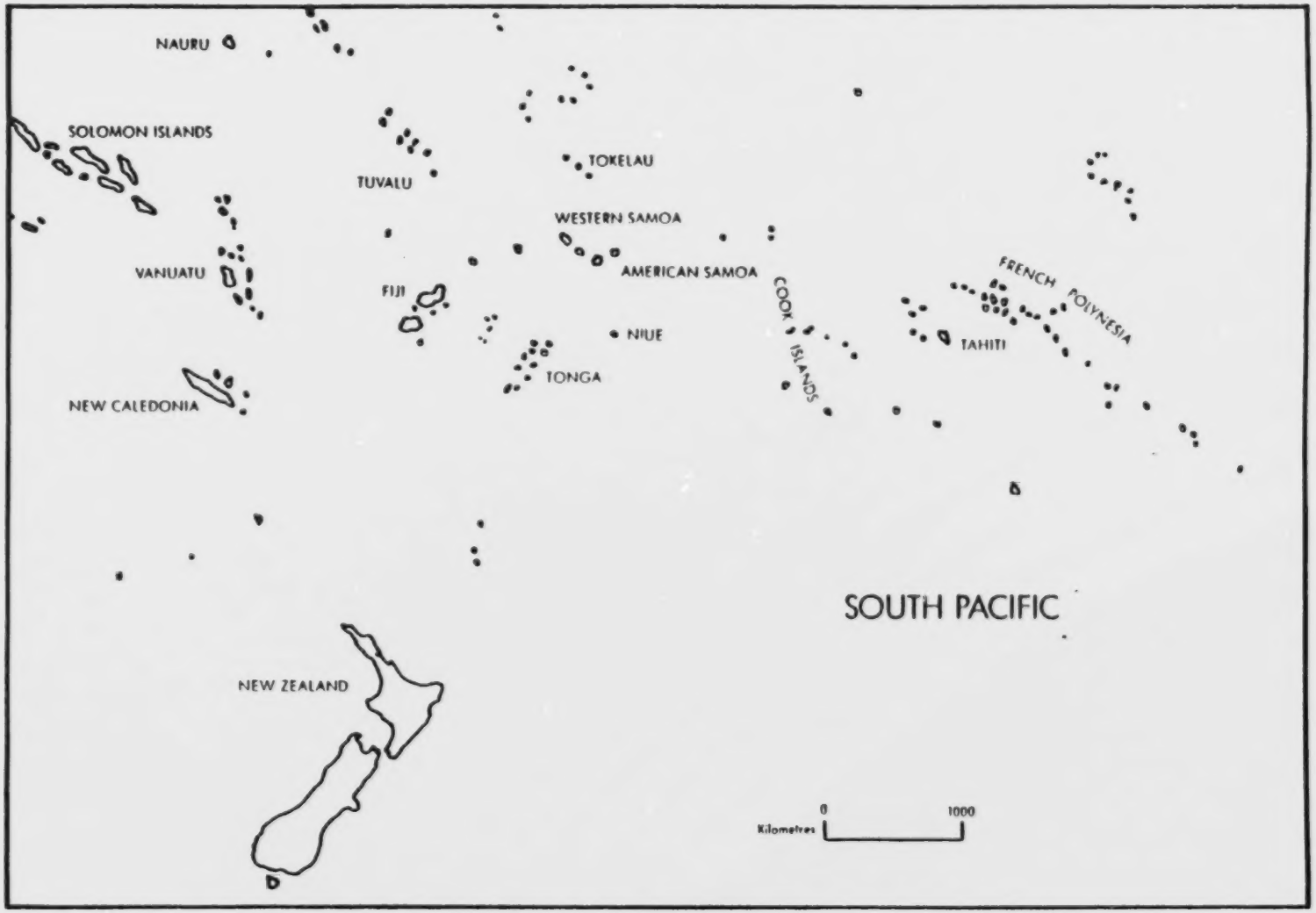
The island of Niue is described as a raised atoll and is considered to be the largest of its kind in the world. Originally an atoll, either some kind of volcanic thrust pushed the island and its reefs up 100 feet or a receding sea level exposed the land, so that another reef formed around this raised land. Many years later, another geologic action raised the original island and its second reef up another 100 feet (Smith 1983, 5). This lower reef portion is now about 75-100 feet above sea level. Because of its origin, the island is totally made up of coral; there is no volcanic rock. The

NIUE



Capitol: **Alofi**

Land Area: **100 sq. mi.**
Sea Area: **65,000 sq. mi.**


NAURU
SOLOMON ISLANDS
TUVALU
TOKELAU
WESTERN SAMOA
AMERICAN SAMOA
VANUATU
FIJI
NIUE
COOK ISLANDS
FRENCH POLYNESIA
TAHITI
TONGA
NEW CALEDONIA
SOUTH PACIFIC
NEW ZEALAND
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1000
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coastline is rocky with no natural beaches. Deep crevices and cliffs have been formed by weathering (Trotter 1979, 4). In contrast, much of the higher central plateau is a dense tropical rain forest.

Being so close to the equator, Niuean days are hot, but the temperature drops at night. Moreover, the constant tradewinds keep the island cool. There are two seasons in the year: a dry season from April to November and a wet season from December to March. The average annual rainfall is 2780 mm ("Niue: All You Want to Know" 1987, 215).

PEOPLE

The people who populated Niue were Polynesians. The oral traditions say they came from Tonga, Fonua-galo or Tulia. The latter two names are not specific places and Tonga, to the Niuean, did not mean the island country in particular. It was used to refer to a foreign country, a ship or a foreigner (Smith 1983, 75). In actuality, the people don't know where they came from; they do know that they have lived on the island for many generations (Chapman and others 1983, 24).

It is theorized that the migrations to Niue occurred between the 8th and 12th centuries. The first people who possibly settled in Niue about 700 A.D., were the Motu people. S. Percy Smith thought that the homeland

was probably Samoa because there are many Samoan words in the Niuean language. He also thought migration had to be about 700 A.D. since after that time Samoan society developed kings and cannibalism which Niue did not practice (Smith 1983, 77-78). However, David McDowell pointed out that Tonga did not have kings until the 11th century and that there are also many Tongan terms in the Niuean language (McDowell 1961, 119-120).

Although the Niuean people are Polynesians, there are ways the original culture differed from other Polynesian cultures. The people lived in a kind of democracy. There was no divine line of chiefs, no caste division of labor, nor an inherited line of priests (Loeb 1924, 393). Cannibalism and tattooing were not practiced in Niue (Smith 1983, 78-79), though they were in most other areas. Unlike the Hawaiians and other Polynesians, lengthy genealogies were not kept. Families traced their ancestors back about four generations for the purpose of land ownership (Loeb 1924, 393). These factors suggest that Niue was probably settled before these beliefs and practices developed in the rest of Polynesia.

Scholars agree that there were several migrations to Niue. The oral history refers to the arrival of other people. The division of two groups in Niue, the Motu in the north and the Tafiti in the south, also supports this concept. Throughout their history, there have been conflicts between these two groups suggesting basic differences caused by different migrations.

This idea is further supported by the fact that the two groups speak different dialects and there are also some differences in the myths and legends (Loeb 1923. 23).

While the Motu people are thought to have arrived in 700 A.D., the Tafiti probably did not arrive until 500 years later. Smith thinks they came from the Tonga-fiti people who were expelled from Samoa around 1250 A.D. During this time in history, there was interaction and intermarriage among the Polynesians and with the Melanesian people of the Fiji group. Thus, there are Tongan words in the Tafitian dialect. The southern people are also darker complexioned and have different features from their northern neighbors (Smith 1983, 81).

MIGRATION--ACCORDING TO THE MYTHS AND LEGENDS

In the beginning, Niue island was nothing but coral *(he puga)*. A god *(aitu)* came from the south and pulled up an island with his fishhook. At this time, the heavens hung low, but the spirit god, Maui, pushed up the heavens (Cowan 1923, 238).

Until the missionary teachers arrived in 1846 and 1849, the past was recorded through the oral history. Much of the history of Niue has been pieced together from this oral tradition, writings of the missionaries, anthropological studies, information from other island groups and written

records of people who passed by the island.

Pulekula, a teacher at Tama-ha-le-leka, relates the story of the beginning of human existence on the island of Niue in the Journal of the Polynesian Society published in 1903:

There were five gods called *tupua:* Fao, Faka-holo, Huanaki, Lageiki and Lageatea, who lived on the island of Motugalo. These men were lazy and did not help in the preparations of feasts. Therefore, they were not given a portion of the food, a great insult in their society. After a time of this kind of treatment, they decided to leave the island to find another place to live.

Reaching Niue, the five *tupua*[2] came up from a pool in the reef. Fao, Fakaholo and Huanaki claimed areas for their homes. However, at this time, the waves swept over the island. Fao and Huanaki set to work increasing the island with Huanaki doing most of the work. When this was done, Huanaki gave names to the land. He then had children who became *tupua* of different parts of the island, such as the ocean, the waves, fish, sand, rocks, etc. The *tupua* increased to rule all dimensions of the earth.

Lageiki also came up from the pool but waited for the women to arrive. He had many children who populated the island. Lagiatea rose

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[2]The writer has followed the Polynesian practice of not pluralizing nouns.

after all the work was completed and remained on the cliff tops. These last two gods were cruel and considered evil (Pulekula 1983, 99).

Other expeditions to other islands as well as ships coming to Niue are described in the legends. It is said that Fao and Huanaki sailed to Tutuila, Samoa, and returned with a gift of the coconut from the Samoan chief (Chapman 1983, 239). Another version has Levei-matagi and Levei-fualolo sailing to Matua and getting coconuts from the Chief Moa (Smith 1983, 91). Mataginifale, an expert tapa maker, was swallowed by a whale who took her to Tonga where she married a Tongan king and had a son named Mutalau (Chapman 1983, 87). Mutalau returned to Niue where he became a king. Smith suggests that he was an ancestor of the Tafiti people. Laufoli, a brave warrior, traveled to Tonga where he performed feats, killed a giant in a cave and then returned home (Smith 1983, 80-84).

Other stories of outsiders coming to Niue and battling with the people appear throughout the literature.

SOCIAL STRUCTURE

The basic group in Niuean society was the *magafaoa*, extended family. Each family group was led by the *takitaki magafaoa* who was the supreme authority. In this society, the men held all the power and this power was passed from the father to his eldest son. Women had very little

authority and that only in minor matters (Chapman 1983, 92).

Within the *magafaoa* were different classes of people, from those with power--chiefs, warriors, heroes, to the lowest groups such as lazy people and thieves. Unlike other societies, these social classes were based on achievement and fame rather than on a genealogical line. However, a person of high standing did not marry into a low ranked family. Since one did not marry within his own extended family, a person from a chief's family would marry someone in the same class from another *magafaoa* in order to concentrate the sources of their power (Chapman 1983, 91-92).

The importance of being born into the *magafaoa* is indicated by the status of the wife who was not blood-related to the extended family in which she lived. If a woman's honor needed to be defended, it was her brothers, not her husband, who did it. Likewise, if a man was eating a meal when he was called to battle, his sister, not his wife, would be the one to finish what was left behind. The wife retained the status of her own family's *magafaoa*. Even if she married below her, she would still keep the higher status. On the other hand, being a man did not guarantee all privileges. If a husband went to live with his wife's *magafaoa,* he did not receive the full rights of a male member in that extended family (Chapman 1983, 92).

In their oral history, Niueans recite a list of kings of the island-wide

central government. However, different families have slightly different lists of names. Furthermore, outside of these names, there are no descriptions of any king nor listings of any achievements. This suggests that the king may have merely been a figurehead without any real power. Whatever the reason for the lack of detail, having no more than nine kings in hundreds of years probably meant that there was a chief of chiefs only when one was strong enough to gain this power (Chapman 1983, 93).

One last comment about relationships in this society. Since there was no monetary exchange system for payment of goods and services, a system of *fakalofa* (exchange) was followed. In western society, one tries to get more than one gives. In Niue, on the other hand, people must return an equal or greater amount than they receive. Accepting a gift or service obligates that person to give something in return. Also, if a person has a large catch or a plentiful harvest, he has to give all his relatives in the *magafaoa* a share of his bounty (Loeb 1926, 113-15).

WARFARE

According to Edwin M. Loeb, the Niuean people lived in a state of almost incessant warfare. There was no system of atonement for wrong-doing among groups and no leader was strong enough to come between the feuding families. Fighting was so intense that some family groups lived in

caves or in the bush in order to avoid warring parties (Loeb 1926, 128).

Though wars were frequent, they were more like skirmishes between villages. There was no great loss of life, a situation which would have become a critical problem on such an isolated island. Wars could involve one village against another, several villages against other groups, Motu against Tafiti (Loeb 1926, 134). There are also records in the oral history of battles with Tongan foreigners. Reasons for fighting varied. They included fighting for one's honor, getting even with the enemy, seeking revenge or civil war. The legends are filled with stories of men in battle--usually the brave are rewarded and honored and the cowardly and foolish are killed.

Niuean weapons included throwing stones *(maka)*, spears *(tao)*, barbs for spears *(hoe)*, and clubs *(katous)*. The bow and arrow was used strictly for hunting, never in warfare. This part of Niuean life was so important that Loeb devoted 23 pages to warfare and heroes (Loeb 1926, 129-56).

RELIGION

Of the four major gods of Polynesia, Tagaloa, Tu, Tane and Rogo, only two are mentioned in Niuean oral history. The only thing said about Tu is that he was an albino god. However, Tagaloa was the supreme god of the Niueans. He was the war god and the god of the sea. Chants were

offered to him to ask his blessing and his help in any undertaking. Tagaloa was identified with the rainbow and was considered very sacred (Loeb 1926, 129-60).

Tupua, on the other hand, were human beings who acquired supernatural powers. The original men who inhabited Niue were *tupua*--deified ancestors. Their progeny also became *tupua* of all things in nature. They could be guardian spirits or malicious sprites (Smith 1983, 48). *Tupua* were called upon to protect people and their property. They were the local village and family deities and each had its own name and function depending on the kind of activity the village was involved in (Chapman 1983, 98).

Niueans believed that there was a supernatural element, *mana*, in everything of nature. This *mana* could be transmitted from father to son and could be a skill such as canoe making or fishing. An object which held the family *mana* was called a *fue*. This sacred emblem was carried to war and used to challenge the enemy (Loeb 1926, 184-85, 94-95). In the myth of Kalalahetau and the Fue, the Motu Kalalahetau was carrying the *fue* to war, but left his weapons and the sacred object down when he met a beautiful woman. Because of this indiscretion, when they went to battle, Kalalahetau was killed and his family was beaten by the Tafiti (Niue Education Department 1972, 36).

Another form of a god was the *tokamotu*, a sacred object that was hung in a special house at Fatuana. The *tokamotu* was the core of life of the Niuean people; all power emanated from its center. *Tapu* to all but chiefs, it required special treatment in order to protect the island from disasters such as famine or disease. The *tokamotu* was carefully guarded because it held the power of whomever possessed it. It is said to have been taken and hidden in a cave somewhere in Kavatonu (Kumitau 1956, 1-2).

In order to appease the gods or ask them for assistance in battle, the priest or shaman, *taula-atua*, conducted ceremonies for the people. He was also consulted for advice on whether to go to war or not. Once started, the shaman would pray to the gods for success on the battlefield (Chapman 1983, 99-100).

HISTORY--POST EUROPEAN NIUE

1774	Captain James Cook reaches Niue
1830	John Williams, missionary, takes two Niuean boys to Samoa
1846	Penianina, Niuean missionary, arrives
1849	Paulo, Samoan missionary, arrives
1861	Dr. G. Lawes, first European LMS missionary, arrives
1876	Mataio Tuitoga appointed king
1887	Mataio Tuitoga dies

1887	Niueans apply to Queen Victoria for British Protection
1888	Fataaki appointed King
1896	Fataaki dies
1898	Togia appointed king
1900	Niue proclaimed a British Protectorate
	New Zealand formally annexes Niue
1901	"The Cook and Other Islands Government Act, 1901" Niue placed under Rarotongan administration
1903	"The Cook and Other Islands Amendment Act, 1903" Niue granted separate administration
1916	"The Cook Islands Amendment Act" Laws revised; still in effect today
1917	Togia, last king of Niue, dies (Loeb 1926, 43-44)
1970	Airport opens
1974	Niue becomes a self-governing country in free association with New Zealand (Chapman 1983, 138)

NIUE TODAY

Niue today is a self governing country in free association with New Zealand. The people are British subjects as citizens of New Zealand. On the local level, village councils form the government. The island-wide central government consists of a twenty member Assembly elected by the people, the High Court and a four member Cabinet consisting of a premier

and three ministers. The Assembly elects a Premier, and he, in turn, selects three assembly members to be ministers. Defense and international affairs are conducted by New Zealand ("Niue: All You Want to Know" 1987, 215).

In the film, Niue, All You Need is Aid, Niue is described as the most aid dependent government. For every $1 it receives in taxes, the government receives $5 in aid (Niue--All You Need is Aid 1978)

Although the soil is not particularly fertile, people still manage to grow taro, bananas, sweet potatoes and other crops for the island consumption. In addition, many of these products are exported. Handicrafts and copra are also exported, mostly to New Zealand ("Niue: All You Want to Know" 1987, 215-16).

All children go to primary school and are taught in the native language and in English. There is one high school in Alofi. Students go abroad or study by university extension for higher education.

A problem Niue is facing is the emigration of its people. In 1978, when the previously mentioned film was produced, the population was about 3500. At that time, there were more Niueans living in New Zealand than in Niue itself (Niue--All You Need is Aid 1978). In 1987, the Pacific Information Bank listed the island population as 3000.

Steps are being taken to increase tourism in order to enhance the economy. The government is also encouraging people to develop industries and business to provide jobs for the people, reduce the trade deficit and increase the tax base ("Niue: All You Want to Know" 1987, 215).

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Niue--All you need is aid. 1978. 16 mm 28 min. Hong Kong: Hawke Films. Motion picture.

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Smith, Stephenson Percy. 1983. Niue: The Island and Its People. In Niue: The Island and Its People. Suva: Institute of Pacific Studies and Niue Extension Centre of the University of the South Pacific. Reprint 1902-1903. Journal of the Polynesian Society, 11 & 12.

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TWO NIUEAN LEGENDS*

THE BAT AND THE RAT

Fruit bats or flying foxes are eaten on Niue as food, but some people will not eat them. This story gives the reason why they don't.

There once lived a bat and a rat who were very good friends. When there was work to be done they did it together. One day they made up their minds to go to the bush and clear some ground for a banana plantation.

They cleared the land and planted the banana shoots. On the way home they felt very pleased with themselves and began to play hide and seek. The rat always won the game because he was a very cunning fellow.

Some weeks later the bat asked the rat to go to the banana plantation and see how the plants were growing. The rat scampered through the bush to the plantation and found that all the banana plants had put out their first leaf. When he arrived home he told his friend the bat that they hadn't started growing yet.

Several weeks went by and the bat again asked the rat to go to the plantation to see how the banana plants were growing. Again the rat scampered through the bush with his long tail rustling through the dry leaves. Every banana plant in the plantation had a lovely bunch of red bananas on it. The rat was very pleased with what he saw. He told the bat when he arrived at their home that the bananas were just showing their first leaves and it would be many weeks before they would have any fruit. The bat remarked (said) that there hadn't been much rain and this was why the plants were so slow in growing.

A month later the bat asked his friend the rat to go to the banana plantation and see how the plants were growing. The cunning rat scampered through the bush and his long tail rustled the dry leaves. The bananas were just right and the rat ate as many as he could. His journey home was very slow. He told the bat that the bananas were beginning to fruit, but it would be some time before they were ripe.

Every day for the next month the rat scampered through the bush with his tail rustling through the dry leaves. Every day he ate as many red bananas as he could until there were none left. The very next morning the bat asked the rat to come with him to the banana plantation because the fruit should be ripe and they would enjoy a good meal together. When they reached the plantation there stood the banana plants with their empty stalks hanging down. The two friends went from tree to tree but all the fruit had been eaten. The cunning rat said to the bat that he thought the birds had stolen their fruit. Angry with hunger and rage, the bat called all the birds in the island. He called them from the North, from the South and from the East and West.

As the birds arrived he lined them up in long lines and asked them to open their beaks. He and the rat examined the inside of every bird's beak but not one of them were stained red from the bananas. He turned to the rat and told him it was his turn. The rat tried to avoid this by asking the bat who his best friend was. When the bat answered that he, the rat, was, the rat again asked him if he couldn't trust his best friend. No matter how hard the rat tried the bat still said he had to take his turn. There was no escape and when the rat opened his mouth the bat and all the birds saw the red stains on his teeth and on the inside of his mouth. The unfaithful rat was chased away by the angry unhappy bat who went home to a very lonely house.

The bat missed his friend the rat. He missed his company. He missed the games they used to play.

A few months later as he was walking through the bush he heard his old friend's voice. He stopped and looked at the rat who sitting right at the top of a coconut tree.

"Hello old friend," said the rat. "It's a long time since I've seen you. I've really missed you. My friend please don't hate me. I couldn't help being greedy and eating all the bananas. I ask your forgiveness. May I come and talk to you?"

As the rat climbed down the bat thought of the good times they had had and of how much he missed his old friend. His heart softened and he was ready to forgive his friend. When the rat reached the ground they rushed to each other and showed their friendship by holding each other tightly. In the shade of the trees they talked happily for many hours.

"I'd like to try your wings," said the rat but the bat wasn't really listening. The rat asked again and this time the bat said, "Yes, dear friend, but don't fly too high". When he had the wings on, the rat flew slowly and close to the ground. "You fly very well for a rat," said the bat. The rat then flew a little higher and a little faster. Suddenly he flew up and faster and as he did so, he called good-bye to the poor unhappy bat on the ground. The poor bat pleaded (cried) for his wings but the cruel unfaithful rat flew away.

To this day many people still believe that the rat is the bat and the real bat is the rat. And this is the reason why they will not eat bats.

THE STORY OF THE WINDS

Leveimatangi was working in the bush planting taro. No matter which way he turned the winds blew dust into his face making him cough and his eyes water.

Leveimatangi asked the winds to go away and leave him alone but the naughty winds continued their game.

Unable to bear it any longer Leveimatangi chased the winds and caught each one of them in a taro leaf. He carried the four leaves to a cave at Tatutu-Liku and hung them up. As he finished, his two sons came into the cave. "Do not touch these, Lefeke and Pupukimaka. Always be careful with them." He went back to his planting, and the two boys played in the cave. Lefeke had a thorn with him and just before they left the cave he pricked a hole in each of the four leaves. The winds escaped and rushed over the island.

This is why we always have winds blowing over the island and how *matangi* (taro of the winds) got its name.

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*Niue Education Department, Niue: Resource Book for Teachers. Alofi: Niue Education Department, 1972.

SELECTED ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY
Background Information and Folk Literature

Chapman, Terry C., et. al. Niue: A History of the Island. Suva: Institute of Pacific Studies of The University of the South Pacific and the Government of Niue, 1983.

This book is the result of a writing workshop held in 1982. The participants attempted to compile a written history from the original culture and oral traditions of Niue. Some information came from family stories and some from the written work of Europeans and Samoan teachers who lived in Niue. Each section is written in Niuean and translated into English. The early history is derived from the legends of human beginnings. The original inhabitants have become folk heroes, and their stories are passed on in the oral tradition. For the older student. Black and white photographs, a map, glossary, bibliography and index included.

Cowan, James. "The Story of Niue: Genesis of a South Sea Island." Journal of the Polynesian Society, 32 (1923): 238-43.

Summary of the history of Niue translated from a manuscript written by John Lupo, a Samoan Chief who was a mission teacher. Starts with the myth of Maui pulling up the island and raising the heavens, and continues with the coming of man, bringing of coconuts, and fighting among villagers and between Niueans and outsiders. It goes on with the coming of Christianity, the Peruvian slave ships and ends with a story of Taole, the only Niuean who was captured by a slave ship, taken to Callao to work and escaped to return to Niue. High school and above.

Cowan, James. Suwarrow Gold and Other Stories of the Great South Sea. London: Jonathan Cape, Ltd., 1936.

Collection of stories about sailors, pirates, explorers and their voyages and experiences in the Pacific. Of particular interest is "The Story of Taole the Sailor." Taole was taken from Niue by a Peruvian thief ship to Callao to work as a slave. He escaped on an

American whaler and sailed on different Pacific vessels until he came back to Niue many years later. Taole was the only Niuean to survive this ordeal and return to tell about his experience. Middle school students and up.

Fifth Festival of Pacific Arts. Souvenir Video, Volume 1. (Murrie Television Pty, Ltd., 1988.) VHS Videotape.

Presents dances of performances by Pacific basin groups at the dance festival at Townsville, Australia. At the end of the first volume is a short presentation of two Niuean dances. Both dances are done in a sitting and/or stationary position. Hand movements and overall sound of the music can be observed.

Kaeppler, Adrienne L. Polynesian Dance with a Selection for Contemporary Performances. Honolulu: Alpha Delta Kappa -Hawaii, 1983.

One of eight selections of dances from five Polynesian islands is a contemporary Niuean folk dance, "Tau Mamatua Nae." Composed by Mata Smith for high school students to perform for important visiting dignitaries. This book was written for teachers who want to supplement their studies with a dance activity. Charts and information on dance motions, an introduction to Polynesian dance and a bibliography are included.

Loeb, E. M. The Shaman of Niue." American Anthropologist, 26 (1924): 293-402.

The shaman and his role in Niuean society is presented along with a discussion of the religion and gods of the island. Certain shamen who lived on the island when Loeb was doing his anthropological study of Niue are described.

_____. History and Traditions of Niue, Bulletin 32. Honolulu: Bernice P. Bishop Museum, 1926.

Commissioned by the Bishop Museum in Hawaii to make an anthropological survey of Niue, the author spent seven months in 1923-24 studying the culture and oral history of the people. The ancient culture and the island life was studied, including subjects such as the geography, history, sociology, government, lives of the people, warfare and religion. The last section is a collection of

myths and chants from Niue. In addition, interspersed among the descriptions of Niuean life are other stories on the legends of the island. For the serious student and researcher. Small black and white line drawings and photographs depicting island people, locations and artifacts. While there is no index, there is a comprehensive table of contents and list of illustrations.

Maude, H. E. (Henry Evans). "Niue." Slavers in Paradise: The Peruvian Labor Trade in Polynesia, 1862-1864. Suva, Fiji Institute of Pacific Studies, The University of the South Pacific, 1981, 55-9.

A factual account of the slave ships from Peru. Three ships took a total of 109 Niuean men, some willingly and others by kidnapping, to work as slaves. These ships operated in the Pacific Ocean in order to provide needed labor in the mines and fields of Peru.

McDowell, David K. "A History of Niue." M. A. Thesis, Victoria University College, 1961. Microfilm.

Using the oral folk literature, the writing of outsiders, and information from other Polynesian cultures, the author has pieced together a history of Niue from the ancient times to the present. He discusses some points that early authors have made about the origins and migration of the Niueans and refutes some of the early writings of Loeb and Smith. For the older student.

Miles, G. P. "Notes on the Material Culture of Niue." Ethnologia Cranmorensis, 3 (1938): 19-22.

Pictures of clubs, spears, throwing stones, fishhooks, a canoe, a pillow, combs, nose flutes and tapa beaters from Cranmore Museum are pictured along with a short description of their uses.

Morris, G. N. "Niue Folklore." Journal of the Polynesian Society, 28 (1919): 226-28.

This article relates "The Story of the Veka and the Kale" in Niuean and in an English translation. (The *veka* and the *kale* are two different types of birds in Niue.) Notes about the Veka being extinct, the Kale still plentiful and where the mentioned places in the story are located in 1919 Niue are included. The story is about how

the two birds divided the places where each may get its food. High school research.

Niue--All You Need is Aid, 16 mm, 28 min. Hong Kong: Hawke Films, 1978. Motion picture.

Niue in the 1970's is presented in this short film. Includes the geographical features, the people, the administration and their economic and social activities, economy, government and resources of the island. Presents a problem of the island: many people are emigrating to New Zealand and draining the island of its young and adventuresome people. Good background information.

"Niue: All You Want to Know." 1987 Pacific World Directory. Saipan: Pacific Information Bank, 1987.

Gives up to date information on Niue and on other Pacific islands. Brief synopses on the geography, climate, history, people, government, economy, etc. are presented to those who may be interested in visiting, settling or investing in the country. Map of island included.

Niue Centre. Modern Niuean Poetry. Niue: The University of the South Pacific Extension Services, 1978.

Poems by contemporary Niuean writers were selected from entries to the first National Poetry Competition in 1978. Poems reflecting the island, its lifestyle, cultural changes, history and philosophy, and its uniqueness are written in English and Niuean. Writers are island adults and students in primary grades and in high school.

Niue Education Department. Niue: Resource Book for Teachers. Alofi: Niue Education Department, 1972.

Resource book on Niuean life for teachers. Presents facts on the island and explains the way of life of the early Polynesians. At the end of the book is a section on myths and legends of Niue. The selection is from a wide variety of subjects and written especially for telling to students. Many stories involve Niue's oral history; others explain why place names have come to be and why certain things are practiced on the island. There are also a number of animal stories. Stories are better told than read directly to students.

Niue Newsletter. Niue: Government of Niue, 1-14 (10/21/53 - 2/15/66). Microfilm.

Interspersed among the news stories on current events and informational articles on island life are short Niuean myths and legends. Many stories are similar to ones written in other books. An interesting development, however, are stories sent in by readers who have variations of tales which have been handed down through their families. One tale on why the island is called Niue has many interpretations which readers submitted. Often, readers would comment on a certain legend with their own interpretation. Mimeographed pages are sometimes difficult to read; some missing issues.

Pulekula. The Traditions of Niue-fekai." Journal of Polynesian Society. 12 (1903): 22-31, 85-118. Reprint in Stephenson Percy Smith. Niue: The Island and Its People. Suva: Institute of Pacific Studies and Niue Extension Centre of The University of the South Pacific, 1983.

Oral tradition of Niue is related in the native language and translated into English. Pulekula, a teacher at Tama-ha-le-leka, tells of the five original gods *(tupua)* who settled on the island and of other tupuas who ruled over all things on the earth. Continues with the birth of man, his exploits, travels of two brothers who return with the coconut *(niu)* and relates other stories of heroic men and women of antiquity. Mohe-lagi of Alohi goes on with the more recent history of Niue. For the older student.

Smith, Mata. "Tau Mamatua Nae." Polynesian Dances (tape recording). Washington, D.C.: Adrienne L. Kaeppler, 1983.

This tape recording is originally from the Archives of the Bishop Museum and is found in the Music Section of the Hawaii State Public Library System. It was distributed as a record along with Kaeppler's book on Polynesian Dance and can be used when presenting the Niuean dance "Tau Mamatua Nae."

Smith, Stephenson Percy. "Niue: The Island and Its People." Journal of the Polynesian Society. 11 & 12 (1902, 1903); reprint, Niue: The Island and Its People, Suva: Institute of Pacific Studies and the Niue Extension Centre of The University of the South Pacific, 1983.

Description of the island and the people of Niue by the Government Resident at the time of the annexation of Niue by New Zealand. The island, the people, the religion and way of life and the history and traditions of the island are described. In addition, the appendix, by Pulekula, and the last chapter (IV) on History and Traditions includes the folk literature of Niue. Maps and black and white photographs included. Descriptions are written in a conversational manner.

Thomson, Basil Home, Sir. Savage Island: An Account of a Sojourn in Niue and Tonga. London: J. Murray, 1902; reprint, Papakura, New Zealand: R. Macmillan, 1984.

Account of a trip to Niue and Tonga in 1900. Sir Basil Thomson visited Niue in order to deliver an answer to an 1887 request from the king of Niue to Queen Victoria to have Niue taken under British Protection. Includes a description of the island, the geographical features, the people encountered, a day to day account of his activities. Also, custom of the people, their laws and way of life and includes reports from others on activities that he was not able to observe (i.e. Niuean wars.) The book's second half is on Tonga where Thomson became the prime minister. For the older student.

Tregear, Edward. "A Song of Savage Island (Niue)." Journal of Polynesian Society, 9 (1900): 234-35.

The King of Niue and his nobles chanted this ancient song to the Right Honorable Mr. Seddon on his visit to Niue in May 1899. It praises Tangaloa and the island of Niue. Maui, the demigod, is mentioned as coming from far away. Chorus tells about the turtle and the shark who are sacred fish of the sea.

The Tianak

By
Beryl Ripp

The Tianak

Introduction

Once upon a time in Luzon, in the Philippines, a newly wed couple set off to work in their fields. As they were walking through a path in the forest, they saw a baby sitting on the root of a tree. The cries of the baby moved the young woman. She asked her husband if she could take the baby home and care for it. The husband agreed and they continued on their way with the baby.

When they stopped to rest, the young wife hoped to quiet the baby at her breast, though she knew she had no milk. As soon as the baby's lips touched her, the woman cried out in pain. After a few minutes the woman lay still. The husband, thinking his wife was asleep, went away for a short while. When he returned, he discovered his wife was dead.

The grief-stricken husband looked up, and flying through the forest branches was the baby. The young man knew then that his wife was the victim of a *tianak* (Adapted from Eugenio 1989, 385).

In the Luzon Islands where Tagalog is spoken, the *tianak* (also spelled as *tianac* or *tiyanak*) is a creature of Philippine lower mythology. In the Mindanao Islands in the Mandaya dialect, it is known as a "*patianak.*" In the Moro-Christian culture where Bagobo is spoken, it is known as "*muntianak.*" Whatever the name, these dwarf-like creatures are a pervading, supernatural, grim character in Philippine folklore.

Dwarfs are not an uncommon folklore character in our world. The dwarfs in European and Philippine folklore share many characteristics. These similarities could be the result of European contact and from the generic traditional rationale and use for folklore stories throughout the world. Indeed, Philippine and Indian dwarf name similarities can be found (Ramos 1967, 33).

Like their European counterparts, the dwellings of the *tianak* can be simple hovels or magnificent palaces. The *tianaks* of the Philippines live underground. Some stories describe their homes as palaces with jars of gold and precious stones. *Tianaks* only come out of their homes at noon or after sunset (Ramos 1967, 25-26).

Like European dwarfs, *tianaks* look like old men with long thin beards, broad facial features and stout hands, feet, elbows and knees. Their clothing may be red or brown and they wear a woven hat. While their eyesight may be poor, their hearing is good.

In European folklore, dwarfs can be boon or bane to humans. In Philippine tales, *tianaks* can be friend or foe. *Tianaks* are also supernatural beings. They are able to travel through holes in termite mounds. They can fly and also make themselves invisible. The ability to change shape, not common in European folklore, can be used to some

interesting ends (Ramos 1967, 25).

The following story, "The Tianac," is a light tale that includes a good description of the *tianak*.

> Once upon a time there lived a boy name Mabute who was the only son of a fisherman. One day he broke the earthen jar used to wash rice, and fearing his father's wrath, Mabute ran away to his cousin's home. Mabute enjoyed living with Matacao and his aunt, Pacita. One evening, the two boys decided to walk to the house of Matacao's girlfriend. They felt brave as they walked along a lonely path. Suddenly, they heard the happy voice of a baby at play. Mabute thought it was an *aswang* (witch) and wanted to run away. However, Matacao was not frightened and convinced Mabute to help him find the baby.
>
> Eventually, the cousins found a plump baby lying on a banana leaf. Mabute picked up the child and claimed it as his. Matacao insisted that since he was the one to suggest looking for the baby, it was his. The boys began to argue. The fight grew bitter and Matacao rushed to a bamboo fence to get a club. Mabute put the child down so that he could defend himself.
>
> Suddenly, the baby changed into an ugly old man. He had a long mustache and a long beard. His eyes were small and his nose, flat. One of his legs was shorter than the other. The baby was really a *tianac*. Mabute was terrified. Sensing fear, the *tianac* bit him on the arm. Mabute screamed loudly. The *tianac* stopped biting and disappeared.
>
> When the cousins reached home, they told Matacao's mother

about the *tianac*. She explained that a *tianac's* left leg is always shorter than his right leg, so when he sits, his right knee is higher than his head. The *tianac* has difficulty running or walking, but he can jump far. Pacita told the boys that the next time they walked alone at night and heard or saw a baby, they must ignore the baby and repeat to themselves, "Jesus, Maria y Josef," and the *tianac* would disappear. Running or showing fear would only encourage the *tianac* to bite (Adapted from Eugenio 1987, 253-254).

The Spanish Influences on Tianak Folklore

Many similarities between the *tianak* and the dwarf in European folklore, especially references to Catholicism, can be attributed to the Spanish influence in the Philippines which began in 1521 with Ferdinand Magellan. One traditional account of the origin of the *tianak* is the belief that it is the spirit of a baby who died before it was baptized (Eugenio 1989, 388). Ways to outwit a *tianak* include: showing the cross (Robertson 1971, 126), saying "Jesus, Maria y Josef" (Eugenio 1987, 255) or turning clothes inside out to scare away a *tianak* (Eugenio 1989, 389). Another European influence is the *tianak* providing a human with gifts of gold (Robertson 1971, 127). There is even one account of a *tianak* described as a creature dressed like a landlord from Spain (Robertson 1971, 118). The individual roots of the European and Philippine origins are difficult to distinguish and can only be surmised.

The Tianak as a Guardian of the Land

In Philippine folklore, the *tianaks* are guardians of the land. To insure a good crop, farmers place food for the dwarfs in the field or under trees as offerings before planting and after harvest as payment for rent. The *tianak* dislikes salt, spices, and other seasonings, so food offerings must be void of these ingredients. The rice is boiled soft because the *tianak* has few teeth (Ramos 1967, 26).

Customs Concerning the Tianak

Many customs of the Philippine people are to insure that the *tianak* is not disturbed or angered. Thoughtless actions on the part of man will cause the *tianak* to seek revenge. To sweep dirt into the eyes of an invisible *tianak* will cause the unsuspecting housekeeper blindness. Housekeepers warn the invisible *tianaks* before they throw water or rubbish out of the house (Ramos 1971, 42). Travelers ask permission of the *tianak* before they walk by ant or termite hills or cross fields where few travelers pass. To step on an invisible *tianak* can make the traveler sick with chills and fevers. An angry *tianak* can pinch a traveler or give him a skin disease. The *tianak* will also contort the mouth or kill the traveler if he is seriously hurt (Ramos 1967, 25).

The Tianak as a Unique Creature

The tianak has several distinctive characteristics which differentiate it from other dwarfs. These characteristics are unique to Philippine folklore and are not usually seen in traditional European dwarf folklore.

In the tale " The Tiyanak," the *tianak* may chirp like a bird to get the attention of its next possible victim.

> There was a rustling of leaves overhead, then all was quiet. "It is just a mynah bird," he thought. "They can laugh and talk much like people sometimes." He picked up a stone and threw it in the direction of the sound to scare the bird away, but although he watched closely, no bird was in sight (Robertson 1971, 118).

The Tianak as a Shapeshifter

The *tianak* is a shapeshifter and may appear as a crying baby to attract attention as happens in the tale "The Patianak."

> Agaton and his wife Marta lived happily and peacefully on their small farm. Their farm provided for all their needs. Their joy would have been complete if their three children had not all died in infancy. Marta was especially heart-broken and frequently visited the graves of her children .
>
> One day Agaton went to visit a neighbor. Marta was by herself tending her vegetable garden. Suddenly she heard the cry of a baby. Her heart ached, for the cry reminded her of her deceased babies.

Following the cries, Marta found a baby that looked exactly like her dead child. Marta wept tears of joy, "The Virgin has heard my prayers and has given me back my child," she cried.

Joyfully, Marta hurried home to breastfeed the crying baby. The baby did not stop sucking at her breast until Marta died. The baby, really a *patianak*, then changed into a black bird and flew away.

When Agaton arrived home, he found only the dead body of his wife Marta (Adapted from Eugenio 1989, 386).

Men are also known to be fooled by the *tianak* as in "The Devil-Child."

Once upon a time there lived a simple but kind-hearted carpenter. One day as he was walking home from work, he heard the cries of a newborn baby. He discovered the naked child, lying among the bushes. Poor child thought the carpenter. He picked up the baby and held it against his body under his shirt to keep it warm. After a while the baby stopped crying. The carpenter began to feel the baby scratch his breast. He thought, for such a little baby, it has sharp fingernails.

As the good man continued his journey, the scratching became sharper. "Aray!" exclaimed the carpenter, "this baby is hurting me!" He looked under his shirt to find the baby had turned into a *tianak!*

The carpenter dropped the *tianak* on the ground and ran away, his ears ringing with the wicked laughter of the *tianak* (Adapted from Eugenio 1987, 255-256).

As a shapeshifter, the *tianak* may also change into other creatures as in the story, "The Witch and the Patianak."

One night while an *aswang* (witch) was flying over the

countryside, she saw a little child walking alone. When she swooped down to catch him and was about to pick him up, the child, who was really a *patianak*, changed himself into a bull (Aquino, Cristobal, Fresnosa 1969, 35-36).

Tianaks have the ability to fly, confuse and mislead travelers. They used their flying ability to block the way of travelers attempting to escape in "Vicente Meets a Crowd of Tianac."

Early one Saturday morning, Vicente and three of his friends decided to climb Mount Arayat and gather rattan. Once they arrived at the foot of Mount Arayat, they agreed to go their separate ways on the condition that they meet in the afternoon at an appointed spot and then walk home together.

Vicente was able to find his share of rattan quickly and started to walk to the meeting place. Suddenly, a group of *tianacs* descended upon Vicente and distracted him. Soon, Vicente was hopelessly lost. He tried to escape, but the *tianacs* blocked his way. Their large noses, wide mouths, and large fierce eyes floated in front of Vicente's face taunting and frightening him. Mesmerized, Vicente submitted and followed the *tianacs*.

Suddenly, Vicente remembered that if he wore his clothes inside out, the *tianacs* would leave him. Quickly, Vicente adjusted his clothes and the *tianacs* vanished.

Vicente hurried to the place where he was to meet his friends. After waiting for some time, his friends did not show up, so Vicente walked home alone.

When he reached his village, he discovered his friends were

already at home. He said to them, "Some friends you are! Why didn't you wait for me this afternoon?"

Surprised at Vicente's outburst they explained, "On Saturday, we waited for you until nightfall. It is now Monday. We have been searching for you for two days. Where have you been?"

Vicente then told his friends of his encounter with the *tianacs* who held him captive not only in the forests, but in time as well. Since then, Vicente and his friends never traveled alone in the strange forest of Mount Arayat (Adapted from Eugenio 1989, 389-390).

The Tianak as a Kidnapper

The *tianak* is known to kidnap children who have nice names and sweet voices. Tales with European influences relate how gold and precious stones are used to entice pretty girls to marry a *tianak*. A maiden can wear a necklace of garlic or crocodile's teeth or have a plain name to discourage the attention of a *tianak* (Ramos 1967, 25-33). *Tianaks* take children to their homes and try to entice them to stay and be their playmates as shown in "Bata and the Tianac."

One night, Bata and his friends decided to play a game of hide-and-seek. Bata merrily ran off to hide in some bushes. Soon he saw a fair child with bright sparkling eyes coming toward him. Bata had never seen the child in his village before. The child called him by his name, for he had heard the other children calling out Bata's name. Bata invited the child to hide with him. The child told Bata he knew

a good place to hide. The two ran off together.

The other children began to look for Bata. They went to all of his favorite hiding places, but Bata was not there. Soon the adults joined in the hunt for Bata, but they too, could not find him. Search parties were organized to hunt for the missing boy. The men searched in the fields and forests until morning without success. Discouraged, families and friends went home to rest before continuing their search.

That same morning, a man went to his banana patch to get some ripe bananas. As he was about to cut the bananas down, he saw the missing boy within a cluster of banana plants. His eyes were open and sunken in. Bata looked very sick. The man tried to unwrap Bata's arms from around the plant, but failed. He called the boy's mother for help, but she could not tear his arms from the plant. Villagers came, but they also could not release the boy. Finally, a priest was called. The priest performed a holy ritual and the people were then able to release the boy's hold on the banana plant. Bata was then taken home where he lay ill for several days.

After a time, Bata's mother asked him what had happened. Bata told her about the strange child who took him to a place with beautiful flowers. The child gave him candy and wanted him to stay with him always. When Bata insisted on returning home, the child grew angry and disappeared. Bata started to walk home, but he could not find his way to the village. Tired, he lay down to rest in a bamboo grove. The next thing he remembered was waking up in his mother's house. Bata's mother knew then that he had been kidnapped by a *tianac* (Adapted from Eugenio 1989, 387-388).

Conclusion

The *tianak* is one of many creatures from Philippine folklore that serves a function in the Filipino culture. Philippine folklore, much like folklore round the world, promotes group unity and order. Children learn from these tales not to stay out at night alone because the *tianak* is looking for bad children (Aquino 1969, 38). The harsh realities of life are forgotten for awhile when the storyteller recounts how Pepe was able to outwit the *tianak* and secure a bag of gold (Robertson 1971, 126). There is fear and wisdom being handed down in the time honored traditions of creatures and their stories.

This brief study of the *tianak* is a small sliver of folklore from a very rich culture of tales and legends. As in most ethnic folklore from Europe and around the world, original and influenced stories exist covering every aspect of life in the Philippines. More stories from the culture need to be collected and shared so the rest of the world may appreciate the vast heritage of Philippine folk literature.

Reference List

Aquino, Gaudencio, Bonifacio Cristobal, and Delfin Fresnosa. 1969. Philippine folktales. Quezon City: Alemar Phoenix.

Eugenio, Damiana. 1989. Philippine folk literature-folktales. Quezon City: University of Philippines.

_____. 1987. Philippine folk literature-the legends. Quezon City: University of Philippines.

Fansler, Dean. 1965. Filipino popular tales. Hatboro: Folkloric Association.

Ramos, Maximo. 1967. The creatures of midnight. Quezon City: Island Publishers.

_____. 1971. Creatures of Philippine lower mythology. Philippines: University of Philippines Press.

Robertson, Dorothy. 1971. Fairy tales from the Philippines. New York: Dodd and Mead.

Annotated Bibliography of Tianak Tales

Tales of the *tianak* may be found in Philippine folklore collections under the following terms: *tianak, tianac, tiyanak,* or *patianak*. The following annotated bibliography includes *tianak* tales for children and adults.

Aquino, Gaudencio, Bonifacio Cristobal, Delfin Fresnosa. Philippine Folktales. Quezon City: Alemar Phoenix, 1969.

"The Witch and the Patianak" is included in this collection. An *aswang*, or witch battles a *patianak*. Both creatures have the ability to change shape. They fight until one of them is beaten. This collection is appropriate for young readers.

Eugenio, Damiana. Philippine Folk Literature. Quezon City: University of Philippines, 1982.

This anthology is a comprehensive collection of Philippine folklore. There are two stories about the *tianak*. In "The Tianac," two cousins find a baby along a deserted path. They argue over ownership of the baby. Suddenly, the baby changes into a *tianac*. In "The Devil-Child," a carpenter finds a baby in a field. The carpenter picks up the baby and puts the baby in his shirt to keep it warm. The baby scratches the carpenter. The man looks under his shirt and finds a *tianak*. This collection of tales is appropriate for adults.

_____. Philippine Folk Literature - Folktales. Quezon City: University of Philippines, 1989.

This anthology includes four stories about the *tianak*. "The Tianak" and "The Patianak" is about a young couple who find a baby. The baby sucks from the woman's breast until she dies. In "Bata and the Tianac," a young boy is lured astray by a *tianac* to be the *tianac's* playmate. Flying *tianacs* lead an adult astray in "Vicente Meets a

Crowd of Tianac." The *tianacs* vanish when Vicente takes off his clothes and wears them inside out. These tales are for adults.

Fansler, Dean. Filipino Popular Tales. Hatboro: Folkloric Association, 1965.

This collection of Filipino tales has one story about the *patianac*. In "The Four Blind Brothers," a *patianak* takes pity on a blind man and helps him secure the house and property of a giant. This is a collection for adult readers.

Robertson, Dorothy. Fairy Tales From the Philippines. New York: Dodd, Mead, and Company, 1971.

This collection of stories is appropriate for young readers. In "The Tiyanak," a wood cutter overpowers a *tiyanak* who gives him a bag of gold. This tale has evidence of Spanish influence.

Annotated Bibliography of Folklore From the Philippines

Alburo, Erlinda, ed. Cebuano Folktales. Cubu City: University of San Carlos Press, 1977.

The eight stories are in Filipino and English. The stories are mainly about people with one story about a mermaid. The book may be read by young adults. The book is available through the Hawaii Public Library System.

Aquino, Gaudencio. Philippine Legends. Quezon City: National Bookstore, 1972.

This collection has twenty-seven stories about places, animals, and plants. There are no stories about the supernatural. The book may be read by young adults. It is available through the Hawaii Public Library.

Aquino, Gaudencio, Bonifacio Cristobal, and Delfin Fresnosa. Philippine Folktales. Quezon City: Alemar Phoenix, 1969.

The thirty stories in this collection include fables, fairy tales, animal, and supernatural tales. This book may be read by children and is available through UH Hamilton Library.

Comber, Leon. Favorite Stories From the Philippines. Hong Kong: Heinemann, 1978.

The stories in this collection include creation stories, myths, and hero tales. Suitable for children to read. The book is available through the Hawaii Public Library.

dela Calzada, Enriquez. Legends of Santa Nino DeCebu. Cebu City: M. Calzoda, 1965.

Magellan used a statue of the Holy Child as the Patron Saint of

his voyages. The stories are about the miracles surrounding the statue. The events take place in the Philippines. This book is for research and is available at the Hawaii Public Library.

Demetrio, Francisco. Myths and Symbols of the Philippines. Manila: National Book Store, 1978.

The collection of stories include creation myths, folk beliefs and customs, and themes in folklore. The author concentrates on the Bisayan culture. This book is for research and available through the Hawaii Public Library.

Domingo, Benjamin. Legends of Two Peoples. Manila: Foreign Service Institute, 1983.

The folktales, myths, and legends in this collection are from Hawaii and the Philippines. They are similar in plot or theme. Suitable for children, the book is available from the Hawaii Public Library.

Dumawal, Rocio. Filipino Stories of Long Ago. Hawaii: Department of Education, 1978.

The collection of myths and legends include why stories, origin stories, and animal tales. Suitable for children, the book is available from the Hawaii Public Library.

Eugenio, Damiana. Philippine Folk Literature. Quezon City: University of Philippines, 1982.

This anthology contains folk literature as well as proverbs, songs, and riddles. For research, the book is available through UH Hamilton Library.

_____. Philippine Folk Literature-Folktales. Quezon City: University of Philippines, 1989.

This is an excellent collection of folklore. This research book is at UH Hamilton Library.

_____. Philippine Folk Literature-The Legends. Quezon City: University of Philippines, 1987.

This is an excellent collection of geographical and supernatural legends. This research book is available at UH Hamilton Library.

Fansler, Dean. Filipino Popular Tales. Hatboro: Folkloric Association, 1965.

This collection of tales is primarily for research. The collection includes animal, numskull, Juan, and hero tales. The book is available at UH Hamilton.

Foranda, Marcelino. Cadaanan nga ugali: A Brief Survey of Iloko Folklore. Manila: DelaSalle University, 1975.

For research, this book contains a bibliography of Iloko folklore. Available at UH Hamilton Library.

Horendo, Florentino. Laji An Ivatan Folk Lyric Tradition. Manila: University of Santa Tomas, 1979.

This research book encompasses a survey of oral tradition, form and content of Laji, as well as occasion when the Laji is used.

Industrial Design Corporation. Filipino Myths and Legends. Philippines: PhilaCor, 1973.

This collection includes romance stories, animal, and supernatural stories. The illustrations are very western. This book is for children and is available through Hawaii Public Library.

Menez, Herminia. Folkloric Communication Among Filipinos in California. Ann Arbor: University Microfilms Int'l, 1973.

This is intended for research. There are some references to supernatural beings. Available at UH Hamilton Library.

Phil, Teresita. Philippine Folk Fiction and Tales. Quezon City: New Day, 1977.

This collection contains Juan stories, as well as origin and why stories. Young adult readers will be able to get this book at the Hawaii Public Library.

Ramos, Maximo. The Aswang Syncrasy in Philippine Folklore. Manila: Philippine Folklore Society, 1971.

The different *aswang* stories are collected in this volume. This is an excellent research book and is available at UH Hamilton Library.

_____. The Creatures of Midnight. Quezon City: Island Publishers, 1967.

The characteristics of the following creatures are presented: Philippine demons, dragons, dwarfs, elves, ghouls, giants, merfolk, ogres, vampires, weredogs, and witches. Intended for children, the book is available at UH Hamilton Library.

_____. Creatures of Philippine Lower Mythology. Philippines: University of Philippines, 1971.

This is an excellent research book that is very comprehensive in the study of creatures of Filipino folklore. It is available at UH Hamilton Library.

Robertson, Dorothy. Fairy Tales From the Philippines. New York: Dodd, Mead, and Co., 1971.

This collection has animal stories, romances, as well as supernatural stories. For children, this book is available from the Hawaii Public Library.

Santos, A. Romance in Philippine Names. Luvimia: National Bookstore.

This is an excellent collection of stories of how places got their names. There are examples of how Christian beliefs are influential in folklore. Contains one hundred and ten stories. This book is for young adults and is available at the Hawaii Public Library.

Sechrist, Elizabeth. Once in the First Times: Folktales From the Philippines. Philadelphia: MacraeSmith, 1979.

This is a collection of animal stories, why stories, and myths. There are two stories about supernatural beings. Young adult readers will be able to find out what tribe the stories originated from. This book is available from UH Hamilton Library.

Wein, Clement. The Four Friends. Cebu City: University of San Carlos. 1983.

The stories in this collection include: 'The Four Good Friends," 'The Man With Four Eyes,' and 'The Origin of Lanao.' Four young adult readers, the book is available through Hawaii Public Library.

Mermaids in Folk Literature

By
Marcia J. Kemble

Last Friday morn when we set sail,
We hadn't sailed far from land,
Till we spied, till we spied a pretty fair maid
With a comb and glass in her hand, her hand, her hand,
With a comb and glass in her hand.

• • •

The moon shines bright, the stars give light,
And my mother is looking for me;
She may look, she may look with a watery eye
She may look to the bottom of the sea, the sea, the sea
She may look to the bottom of the sea.

--traditional ballad

Introduction

The "typical" mermaid of European folklore is an enigmatic and often unreliable creature full of paradox in temperament as well as in form. Usually thought of as near-mortals, mermaids have but one foot (fin?) in the human world and the other in the mysterious world beyond. The mermaid's obvious physical contradictions have a counterpart in her personality, which is depicted sometimes as gentle and beneficent to humans and at other times as evil or avenging and destructive. In her most common guise, the mermaid is a beautiful and alluring creature given to spending her time sunning on the rocks and singing while combing her hair or admiring herself in a mirror. Behind this enchanting exterior, however, is a powerful and potentially dangerous creature whom men had best avoid; many mermaid tales tell of the unhappy consequences of humans who get mixed up with merfolk. On the other hand, there are also tales that tell of mermaids who come to the aid of humans or richly reward them for kind deeds, and even tales that end with very happy marriages between humans and merfolk.

Origins of the mermaid myth

Tales of mermaids and mermen have been found all over the world, but the tradition is strongest in Europe and particularly in the British Isles

and other northern parts. There has been much research and speculation about the origins of the European mermaid myth, and most scholars agree that the image of the mermaid as we know her evolved as an amalgamation of a number of different pagan traditions that combined with elements of classical Greek mythology and later Christianity. By the Middle Ages, the image of the mermaid had more or less crystallized, and belief in merfolk was widespread in medieval Europe. Although belief in merfolk declined in later centuries, fascination with these creatures has persisted to this day.

The earliest recorded ancestor of the mermaid is actually a male, the Babylonian god Oannes from around 5,000 B.C. who was depicted as half fish and half human. Oannes was a benevolent deity who symbolized the positive, life-giving powers of the ocean. This tradition was continued in the kind and just figure of Nereus, the early classical sea-god who was the father of the fifty amiable sea-nymphs known as the Nereids. The Nereids, like later mermaids, were said to have prophetic powers and exquisite singing voices. The earliest female prototype of the mermaid is Atargatis, an early Semitic moon-goddess worshipped by the Philistines and Syrians.

There were many other sea deities and water spirits in classical mythology. Nereus gave way to the important Greek god of the sea Poseidon, who later became identified with the Roman god Neptune. Poseidon's son Triton was the only classical Greek deity to be depicted with a fish tail (or more accurately, with a dolphin's tail). Triton was considered to be a monster and represented the more threatening aspects of the ocean than the earlier sea-gods did.

The Greek Sirens, fatal seductresses who lured sailors with their singing, are probably the best known prototypes of the mermaid and her reputation as a wicked temptress. Although associated with the sea, the

Sirens were actually bird-women with women's heads and birds bodies. In later centuries, as the Sirens became more associated in popular culture with mermaids, the Sirens metamorphosed from part-bird to part-fish.

These classical gods and water spirits all contributed to the lore of the mermaid, but other pagan mythological creatures from many parts of Europe, especially in the north, contributed as well. These include the unreliable Irish merfolk known as merrows, the morgans or sea-fairies of Brittany, the Russian water spirits called Vodyanoi, the Norse necks or nixies, the Cornish merrymaids, the Celtic sechies or seal-men and kelpies or water-horses, and the German Lorelei of the Rhine. These water spirits embodied many of the characteristics, both positive and negative, that came to be associated with merfolk.

Feminine symbolism of mermaids

Although the stories and beliefs of these different traditions include mermen as well as mermaids, there is generally much more emphasis on the latter. This has been attributed to the strong association between the sea and femininity; the wombs and amniotic fluids of women have a parallel with the life-giving waters of the sea. A connection can also be drawn between the cycles of the sea's tides and the twenty-eight day cycles of women's bodies. The mirror frequently seen in a mermaid's hand is sometimes considered to be a symbol of the moon, which is associated with the cycles of the tides and of women's bodies (McHargue 1972, 138-139).

With the rise of Christianity in Europe, many pagan beliefs faded away, but belief in mermaids persisted and was even exploited by the Church. The mermaid and her feminine wiles proved to be a handy symbol of worldly temptation and its dangers. This further enhanced the mermaid's reputation as a vain creature (the mirror and the comb can both be seen as symbols of

vanity) out to lure men to their destruction; she became a popular symbol of vice. The mermaid was also thought not to possess a soul and therefore was incapable of salvation. Sometimes popular belief held that a mermaid could gain a soul through marriage with a mortal, though more often it was the mortal who would lose his soul through such a union. Though mermaids were generally used as a negative example, there were a few mermaid tales that depicted heroic quests of mermaids to achieve salvation by gaining a soul. One example of this is Hans Christian Andersen's popular tale The Little Mermaid, in which the mermaid achieves salvation through her selfless sacrifice for her beloved.

Belief in mermaids as real creatures

Belief in mermaids declined during the Age of Enlightenment, though persistent reports of mermaid sightings kept up interest in the subject and helped maintain the myth in certain quarters. If mermaids only showed up as characters in folktales it might have been easier to dismiss them as mythological creatures, but numerous sightings of mermaids, often well-documented and from credible sources, kept alive the notion that they might be real creatures.

The earliest recorded "scientific" sighting of a mermaid was a detailed firsthand account of the the Roman writer Pliny the Elder in his treatise Natural History in the first century A.D. (Hutchins 1968, 6). There have been many other sightings throughout the centuries since then; even Christopher Columbus reported to have seen three on his voyage in 1492 (Baker 1979, 40). One of the more interesting and frequently quoted accounts is from the logbook of Henry Hudson, the English navigator and explorer, in 1608:

> This morning, one of our companie looking over boord saw a mermaid, and calling up some of the companie to see her, one more came up, and by that time shee was come close to the ship's side, looking earnestly on the men: a little after, a sea came and overturned her: from the navill upward, her backe and breasts were like a woman's, as they say that saw her; her body as big as one of us; her skin very white; and long haire hanging downe behinde, of colour black: in her going down they saw her tayle, which was like the tayle of a porposse, and speckled like a macrell. Their names that saw her, were Thomas Hilles and Robert Rayner (Shay 1951, 35).

Because mermaid sightings have been so widespread and numerous, there have been many attempts to scientifically explain the phenomenon. One common explanation is that observers who think they are seeing mermaids are actually seeing ocean mammals, particularly manatees, dugongs, seals, and walruses. (Manatees and dugongs are both types of sea cows that are now near extinction due to over-hunting; the manatee is the Atlantic Ocean sea cow and the dugong is its Indian Ocean cousin.) These creatures are considered likely candidates to be mistaken for mermaids because they are often about the same size as humans, sometimes assume a humanlike posture, and can emit cries similar to a human's. The manatee in particular is considered a strong possibility because of its hairless white underbelly and its breasts, which look much like a woman's. The manatee is a tropical creature, however, and cannot account for the many mermaid sightings around Britain and the north. Seals are plentiful in this region, but it is hard to imagine how coastal dwellers and fishermen well-acquainted with seals would have difficulty identifying a seal as such. Some scholars suggest that lonely sailors at sea could be sufficiently sex-starved to project hallucinatory visions of feminine beauty onto these creatures, but anyone

acquainted with a manatee's homely face would see that it would require considerable deprivation and disorientation to mistake a manatee for a beautiful sea nymph! In any case, many others besides love-starved sailors have reported seeing mermaids.

Horace Beck states in his book Folklore and the Sea that he believes it to be a mistake to try to identify the mermaid with any single biological entity: "In my own opinion, when talking about mermaids and mermen, we are dealing with man's encounter with the rare, unique and abnormal. When he identifies what he sees, it is in terms of his own knowledge and belief" (Beck 1973, 229-230). This sentiment is echoed by Beatrice Phillpotts in her book Mermaids:

> The early idea of the ocean as a cradle of monsters has generated many legends but none quite as compelling or persistent as that of the fish-tailed siren. The mass of accumulated stories and sightings through history provide an eloquent expression of latent eagerness to believe in one of the most romantic myths created. Born from the 'Mother and love of men, the sea' and embodying a sexual fantasy of universal appeal, the mermaid is clearly too glamorous a creature to be understood by the laws of Science alone. Forever alluring, yet never to be possessed by a living man, her reality is embedded deep in the collective unconscious, the magnetic focus of a ceaseless inchoate longing to dare the wild Unknown. (Phillpotts 1980, 92)

Notes to the Reader

The annotated bibliography presented here is an attempt to offer a sampling of mermaid tales from all over the world. Because collections of folktales from the West are much more readily available than from the far points of the globe, this bibliography is unavoidably weighted towards European and American tales. It is difficult to know whether the relative absence in published folk literature of mermaid tales from other cultures is an indication that the theme is uncommon, or whether the documentation of tales from those areas has been inadequate. It seems particularly puzzling that there are so few mermaid stories from the island cultures of the Pacific, where one would expect to find many.

The scholarly research on mermaids also seems to be limited almost exclusively to the study of mermaid mythology as it developed in Europe and the West; most studies make only fleeting reference, if any, to mermaids as they appear in the folklore of non-Western cultures. Therefore little information is available to put the available mermaid stories from other cultures into context. It is possible that some of them may have been influenced by the stories of the early European maritime explorers or colonizers.

For those readers who might want to locate mermaid tales other than those listed in this bibliography, it may be helpful to know that some collections of folktales include a motif-index based on Stith Thompson's Motif-Index to Folk-Literature (Thompson 1958). Looking up particular themes through use of this index is often helpful, particularly when the

subject is not listed in the ordinary index. Thompson's motif-index numbers for mermaids and mermen are B81 and B82, respectively.

Beatrice Phillpotts' book Mermaids deserves particular mention as a rich source of illustrations of mermaids, as well as for its excellent text. Phillpotts' book includes depictions of mermaids in art through the ages; it covers everything from sculpture dating back to the eighth century B.C. to whimsical contemporary art, and is particularly strong in covering medieval and Romantic paintings, drawings, and sculpture.

Reference List

Baker, Margaret. 1979. The perennial sea-serpent. Chapter 6 of Folklore of the sea. Newton Abbot [England]: David & Charles. [GR910 B28 1979]

Beck, Horace. 1973. Mermaids. Chapter 9 of Folklore and the sea. Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press. [GR910 B37]

Hutchins, Jane. 1968. Discovering mermaids and sea monsters. Tring [England]: Shire Publications. [QL89 H93]

McHargue, Georgess. 1972. The people of the sea. Chapter 6 of The impossible people: A history natural and unnatural of beings terrible and wonderful. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston. [J 398.2 M]

Phillpotts, Beatrice. 1980. Mermaids. New York: Ballantine Books. [GR910 P44]

Shay, Frank. 1951. Seeing things at sea. Chapter 1 of A sailor's treasury. New York: Norton. [G910 S36]

Thompson, Stith. 1955-58. Motif-index of folk-literature. Rev. and enl. ed. Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press. [GR67 T52]

Additional Sources

Adams, Henry C. 1927. The mermaid--kraken--cuttle-fish--gymnotus. Chapter 19 of Travellers' tales: A book of marvels. New York: Boni & Liverright. [G100 A4]

Berman, Ruth. 1987. Mermaids. Chapter 9 of Mythical and fabulous creatures: A source book and research guide, ed. Malcolm South. New York: Greenwood Press. [GR825 N87 197]

Leach, Maria, and Jerome Fried, eds. 1972. Funk & Wagnall's standard dictionary of folklore, mythology and legend. New York: Funk & Wagnall's. [Ref GRE35 F8]

Tripp, Edward. 1970. Crowell's handbook of classical mythology. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co. [Ref BL303 T75 1970]

Selected Annotated Bibliography

Note: All selections are suitable for upper elementary students or older. Those that are suitable for younger children are indicated.

Baker, Augusta. "The Blue Lake." Chap. in The Talking Tree: Fairy Tales from Fifteen Lands. Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1955.
J 398.2 B

A lengthy but very entertaining Spanish folktale about four brothers' quest to rescue their sister, who has been turned into a mermaid and is being kept prisoner under a lake by a nasty sorcerer. With the assistance of a powerful and helpful fairy, the fourth brother finally succeeds in breaking the spell. Includes a wonderful description of the underwater world and its strange inhabitants.

Battle, Kemp B., comp. "The Mermaid." Story in "Love and Marriage." Chap. in Great American Folklore. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1986.
GR105 .G73 1986

A very short and whimsical story told in the easy, colorful style of oral narration. (The compiler notes that this story was originally published in Richard Dorson's Negro Folktales in Michigan.) Describes a sailor's adventure when he is thrown overboard to a mermaid by his shipmates so that she will not capsize their boat. The two get married, but the sailor's infidelity to his mermaid wife eventually results in his being returned to the surface, where he entertains his friends with descriptions of his life under the sea.

Climo, Shirley. "The Mermaid of Zennor." Chap. in Piskies, Spriggans, and Other Magical Beings: Tales from the Droll-teller. New York: Crowell, 1981.
J 398.2 C

This very old tale from Cornwall, in southwestern England, tells of a mermaid who is charmed by the sweet singing of a certain young man in a village by the sea. She begins to secretly go on land to eavesdrop and watch him, and eventually is seen by him. As we might expect, he is instantly in love and, ignoring the pleas of the villagefolk, he joins her

in the sea. This tale, like many others, gives hints at the end that the couple lived a long and happy life in the "blue-green world."

Cothran, Jean, ed. "The Wiliwili Trees." Chap. in The Magic Calabash: More Folk Tales from America's Islands and Alaska. New York: David McKay Co., 1965.
Juv. GR112 .C6

A very short Hawaiian explanatory tale about a handsome man kidnapped by two mermaids (also called "sea-witches" in this English translation). When his wife seeks help from her three jealous and ugly sisters, they refuse her, and are later punished by the gods by being turned into three wiliwili trees. As for the sea-witches, they are cut into a thousand pieces by lightning and become mackerel in the sea. (Lower elementary & above)

Frost, Frances Mary, ed. "The Mermaid of the Moving Sands." Chap. in Legends of the United Nations. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1934.
J 398.2 F

A brief and sad tale from the Netherlands of the revenge of a merman when some haughty and cruel fishermen catch his mermaid wife and decide to take her home as a curiosity. They ignore the pleas of the mermaid and her husband, who says that she'll die on land. In his rage when they refuse to listen, the merman stops up all the channels and waterways with sand and seaweed and causes sand to blow up and cover the village. (Lower elementary & above)

Goodman, Robert B., Robert A. Spicer, and George Suyeoka. Urashima Taro. Norfolk Island, Australia: Island Heritage, 1973.
J 398.2 G

This picture book version of the classic Japanese tale, richly illustrated with vivid and colorful pictures, has as a theme the ephemeral quality of life. It tells of a young fisherman who visits a sea-princess and happily spends time with her, without realizing that hundreds of years are passing in the world above. The story has a poignant ending when Urashima Taro once again returns to his village. (Lower elementary & above)

Hack, Inge. "The Fisherman's Son." Chap. in Danish Fairy Tales. Chicago: Follett Pub. Co., 1967.
J 398.2 H

This tale, while technically about a mermaid, takes place entirely on land. It is a somewhat complicated story of a young lad's quest to free a mysterious and beneficent fish-woman from the spell of a troll. The story employs typical European fairy-tale themes: distant perilous journeys, battles of both strength and wits, magic powers bestowed as rewards, etc. Needless to say, our hero perseveres and ends up marrying his beautiful princess.

Lang, Andrew, ed. "The Mermaid and the Boy." Chap. in The Brown Fairy Book. New York: Dover, 1965.
PZ8 .L15 Br5

A Lapp tale featuring the common theme of a young lad, the son of a King, who is promised in desperation to a mermaid in exchange for her rescue of a foundering ship. The prince, however, is sent far away from the palace so that the mermaid cannot make her claim, and the tale mainly follows the course of his adventures on land. The mermaid does reappear at one point, but is unsuccessful in claiming her due, and in the end the prince marries his own true love.

Leaodhas, Sorche Nic. "The Fisherlad and the Mermaid's Ring." Chap. in Thistle and Thyme: Tales and Legends from Scotland. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1962.
Juv. PZ8.1 .A395 Th

A fisherman spurned by the lass he loves leaves his village to live the life of a hermit in a remote cove. When one day he captures and releases a mermaid caught in his net, he is given as a reward a ring that will win his true love after a year has passed. He does claim his prize at the end of the year, but it is not his first love that turns out to be his true love. A charmingly told tale that manages to preserve the original Gaelic lilt and flavor, even when translated into English.

Maas, Selve, and Peggy Hoffmann. "The Sea Wedding." Chap. in The Sea Wedding and Other Stories from Estonia. Minneapolis, Minn.: Dillon Press, 1978.
Juv. PZ8.1 .M112 Se

A gentle tale of a fisherman who is asked by the Queen of the Sea, who protects all fishermen in the Baltic Sea and brings plentiful fish to their nets, to come down to play his stringed instrument at her daughter's wedding in an undersea chapel. She explains to him that she must soon leave the Baltic Sea because the warships of men are ruining the ocean. This tale explains why the ocean, which used to be calm and full of fish, became a place where bad storms rage and fish are scarce. Includes several colorful illustrations. (Lower elementary & above)

Manning-Sanders, Ruth. A Book of Mermaids. New York: Dutton, 1968.
J 398.2 M

A collection of sixteen mermaid tales from the British Isles, Iceland, Denmark, Portugal, Italy, India, Germany, Arabia, and America. Many of the typical themes in mermaid tales are found: mermaids enticing handsome young men down under the water, merfolk seeking revenge on the humans who have wronged them and giving jewels and magic charms as rewards for those who have helped them. Nicely illustrated with line drawings. (Lower elementary & above)

McHargue, Georgess. The Mermaid and the Whale. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1973.
J 398.2 M

A re-telling in picture book form of an old Cape Cod sailor's yarn, this humorous and unusual story describes a mermaid's unsuccessful attempts to court a finback whale. An interesting author's note at the end describes the history of the tale. Beautifully illustrated. (Lower elementary)

Müller-Guggenbühl, Fritz. "The Mermaid of Zug." Chap. in Swiss-Alpine Folk-Tales. Translated by Katharine Potts. New York: Henry Z. Walck, Inc., 1958.
J 398.2 M

A short tale of a mermaid who convinces a young man to come live with her in her palace under the lake. After a time he begins to be homesick, so she makes a whole portion of his village sink down as well, so that he can again be near his family, friends, and church. This is supposed to explain why to this day fishermen sometimes hear the sound of church music coming up through the waters.

Oman, Lela Kiana. "Aye-Mee and the Mermaid." Chap. in Eskimo Legends. 2d ed. Anchorage, Alaska: Alaska Methodist University Press, 1975.
E99 .E7.O43 1975

This Eskimo legend repeats the universal portrayal of the mermaid as a beautiful but dangerous enchantress, yet also as a creature who generously bestows rewards upon those who do her a good turn. This tale is of a young woman's encounter with a mermaid caught in her fishing net. Though the mermaid never speaks, the reader gets a strong impression of her mysterious and multi-faceted character.

Pino-Saavedra, Yolando, ed. "The Mermaid and the Poor Fisherman." Chap. in Folktales of Chile. Translated by Rockwell Gray. Folktales of the World series. [Chicago]: University of Chicago Press, 1967.
GR133 .C5.P53

An unusual tale, full of unexpected twists and turns, about a mermaid who unsuccessfully tries to capture and keep as a husband a young lad who has been promised to her. With the aid of magic charms, the boy perseveres through a fast-paced series of adventures, most of which occur on land.

Pratt, David and Elsa Kula. "The Spell of the Mermaid." Chap. in Magic Animals of Japan. Berkeley, Calif.: Parnassus Press, 1967.
J 398.2 P

This brief and unusual mermaid tale has as a theme the quest for eternal youth, with a poignant ending somewhat reminiscent of the well-known Urashima Taro story. One of the unusual features of the tale is the inclusion of a mermaid who dies by drowning! (Lower elementary)

Sleigh, Barbara. "Lutey and the Mermaid." Chap. in North of Nowhere. New York: CowardMcCann, 1966.
J 398.2 L

A Cornish tale with the classic motif of a mermaid trying to lure a fisherman down to her underwater world. This fisherman, after rescuing the mermaid, has been granted three wishes and the use of a magic comb to protect him from danger. Although he knows to be wary of mermaids, he falls for her and eventually she succeeds in her ploy. The whimsical ending suggests that it was not such a bad fate after all. (Lower elementary & above)

_____. "The Mermaid and the Monster." Chap. in Stirabout Stories. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1971.
J S

This contemporary fairy tale, told with wonderfully descriptive and often humorous prose, has the feel of an old folktale. It tells of how a shipwrecked sailor comes to the aid of a mermaid who is being courted against her will by a hideous monster.

Riddling in Folk Narratives

By
Melode Reinker

RIDDLING IN FOLK NARRATIVES

Thirty white horses upon a red hill,
Now they champ, now they stamp,
Now they stand still.
Answer: teeth.

The more you feed it
The more it'll grow high,
But if you give it water,
Then it'll go and die.
Answer: fire.

The common riddle may seem like a nonsense game to adults; yet riddles were probably one of the first kinds of formulated thought used by man. Riddles are metaphors and metaphors result from the mental processes of association, comparison and the awareness of similarities and differences (Leach 1972, 938).

De Caro feels that humans need to create order by putting things into categories. The places where these catagories overlap are often the dangerous "tabu" areas of life. Riddles gave people an early "folklore" method of transcending these problem areas. In a riddle, they could directly challenge reality. Riddles often deal with subjects like life, death, and incest. In the so-called "pretended obscene riddle," they can have both an innocent and obscene answer (de Caro 1986, 178).

Riddling practices differ from society to society. Riddles are sometimes

used to teach. The educational character of riddles can be revealed by the meaning of their name. The English word riddle, the German *Rätsel,* and the Greek *ainigma* all derive from verbs meaning to give advice. Riddles can also promote social cohesion, bring good luck, help ease tensions, and give group identity. In some cultures, riddles are a part of wakes, courtship, marriage ceremonies, and other community rituals. Riddle competitions exist in many of the world's cultures. All of these riddling customs find their way into folktales (Leach 1972, 939). Riddles in narrative tales imitate the real social contexts of life.

A familiar riddle story containing a competition is that of Samson in the Old Testament of the Bible. The custom of riddles at weddings is known in many societies. In Judges 15, Samson engages in a riddle contest at his wedding feast. The riddle he asks relates to a colony of bees who have made a hive in the carcass of a lion that Samson had killed.

> Out of the eater, something to eat;
> Out of the strong, something sweet.

The wedding guests are confounded. They must give Samson thirty sets of clothes as the forfeit, so they threaten his new wife and gain the answer. Death is part of this riddle story also, as Samson kills thirty of the Philistines to get the clothing to pay his riddle debt.

Another famous riddle contest is that of Oedipus and the Sphinx. This famous lion-bird-woman sat on a rock outside the city of Thebes. She

questioned every passer-by with the same riddle and threw each to his death when he could not answer:

> 'What walks on four legs in the morning, two legs at noon, and on three legs in the evening?'

When Oedipus gave the correct answer of:

> "Man, who crawls in infancy on all fours, walks erect on two legs in the prime of life, and hobbles with a cane for third leg in old age,"

the Sphinx threw herself off the rock and died. Oedipus had saved the city of Thebes and was proclaimed king (Leach 1961, 46).

The ancient Hawaiians also took their riddles very seriously. All Hawaiian riddle narratives concern contests. The riddle contest was a quick witted debate which took lengthy training and preparation. It had definite rules and high stakes. Success could bring undreamed of rewards, failure, or death (Thompson 1969, 6).

The tale of the "*hoopaapaa* youngster" tells of a lad whose father's bones together with those of many other contestants, lie bleaching in the sun before the enclosure of a chief of Kauai noted for his success in riddling. The boy practices hard at the art of *hoopaapaa* (riddling), and in a long debate of riddles outdoes all the wits of Kauai and avenges his father's death (Beckwith 1922, 317).

A variation on the riddle contest is the "three questions" story, taletype 922 in the Aarne Thompson index. It is known as "The King, the Abbot, and

the Shepherd." A jealous king threatens to take the abbot's property if he cannot answer three questions. A shepherd offers to take the abbot's place at the questioning. Disguised as the abbot, the shepherd gives witty answers to the first two questions. Then the king asks, "What am I thinking?" and the shepherd responds, "You are thinking I am the abbot, but I am a shepherd" (Ashliman 1987, 189). This story has spread internationally with various entertaining questions used for the first two:

> How many stars in the sky? or How many leaves on that tree? Answer: Any large number, then say, "Count them if you think I'm wrong."
>
> How much does the moon weigh? Answer: A hundredweight. There are four quarters in the moon and four quarters in a hundredweight.
>
> How deep is the ocean? Answer: A stone's throw.

The final question is always, "What am I thinking?" and the responder is always someone else in disguise.

One of the most common types of riddle story is the "neck" riddle. Here a character will save his life (his neck) by proposing a riddle that his opponent cannot guess. Usually the riddle is based on information that only the riddler can know. Here is a neck riddle tale collected in Herefordshire, England in 1907:

> There was a man convicted of having stolen a sheep; he was sentenced to death, but the magistrates said he could go free if he could ask a riddle they could not answer, and he was liberated for three days so that he might invent one. As he went out of prison he saw a horse's

skull by the roadside. Returning to prison on the third day in despair he noticed that in it was a bird's nest with six young ones, and he thought of the following riddle:

> As I walked out,
> As I walked out,
> From the dead I saw the living spring.
> Blessed my Christ Jesus be
> For the six have set the seventh free (Norton 1942, 28).

Despite the number of stories, there are no reliable reports of the riddle being used in real life to escape punishment (Burns 1976, 144).

Riddling tales are well known in England and has spread in the United States among the descendants of English settlers in Appalachia and other areas. From them it has spread to African Americans in the South (Norton 1942, 28). A version of this tale common among slaves was that the slave could win his freedom by asking a riddle that the master could not solve. The "Love" riddle is common in both "neck" tales and freedom stories. The slave asks the master this riddle:

> On Love I sit
> On Love I stand
> Love I hold
> Fast in my hand.
> I see Love, but
> Love sees not me.

The answer is that the slave once owned a dog named 'Love.' When the dog died, he had a pillow, some slippers, and a glove made from the dog's skin. He could see the dog, but the dog could no longer see him (Hamilton 1985, 159).

Riddles and riddle contests were often associated with courtship and marriage traditions in many societies. Samson told his riddle at his marriage feast. The Burmese folk hero Pauk Kyaing had to solve a riddle in order to marry the Queen (Keely and Price 1971, 23-32). According to Hart, riddling has been a part of courtship in the rural Philippines, and he describes a riddle story concerning a courtship. In this example, a young woman unable to choose between her three suitors challenges them to answer her riddle. She will wed the one who answers correctly (Hart 1964, 54).

From the European tradition comes the tale of the clever princess. She will marry the suitor who asks a riddle she cannot solve. This is not only a courtship riddle, but also neck riddle because the suitors who fail will be put to death. In the story's usual form, the hero's experiences on his way to the princess's castle form the basis of the riddle. An effort is made by the princess and her family to discover the answer by trickery, but in the end the hero wins her hand. In variations from the West Indies, the riddler is usually not a hero, but a poor boy who can be either simple or smart and occasionally has a club foot. Although his riddle is successful, he does not always get his bride. Sometimes he is sent away with a bag of gold; sometimes he loses his life. Here is a confrontation between the powerful (the king) and a powerless (the riddler) (Abrahams 1985, 89). Unlike tales where the clever riddler always had good luck and wins, here the story demonstrates that power can

and usually does win out.

A king's concern with the cleverness of his population is another common subject of riddle narratives. For example, the king might ask a superlative question, "What is the most powerful thing of all?" then invite the people to answer. A valuable prize is given for the best answer, and in this case the answer is "truth." Sometimes a king hears of a particularly wise peasant, and he may go to test this person or send a representative to do it. In the story "Four Riddles" from Pakistan, the king's magician would turn the woodcutter and his four sons into stones if the woodcutter had not proven as wise as his reputation indicated (Courlander 1955, 53). In a tale collected by the Grimm brothers, a peasant's wise daughter cleverly answers a king's riddle and becomes his bride (Foster 1955, 56).

Escape from the devil himself is another subject of riddle tales. In these stories the protagonist must save his soul by answering the devil's riddle. In the Grimm tale, "The Devil's Grandmother," three soldiers are given seven years of wealth by the devil. At the end of the seven years, they must answer his riddle or belong to him. The soldiers seek the help of the devil's grandmother to find their riddle answer (Grimm 1972, 563). Such tales mirror people's desires and fears.

Interest in riddles seems to wear off as people grow more sophisticated, and the ability to solve riddles also seems to decrease at a time when thinking

skills are needed more than ever:

> "Civilization demands specialists and the grooved, compartmented and departmentalized education which is necessary for the production of experts in technical matters often neglects entirely the more fundamental pedagogy which educated children and adults by teaching them through riddles to look at every problem from all sides, and still keep a sense of humor" (Leach 1972, 939).

Riddles are not just playful uses of language, but involve basic human thought processes (de Caro 1986, 183). Riddles express how people feel and they go side by side with many social customs. Consequently, riddle folk narratives are rich with the color and humor of oral tradition.

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Selected Annotated Bibliography

Alegria, Ricardo E. "Juan Bobo and the Princess Who Answered Riddles." In The Three Wishes: A Collection of Puerto Rican Folktales. New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1969.
J 398 A

A smart princess can answer any riddle and her father desires that she marry someone as smart as she is. He decrees that she will marry the man who asks a riddle that she can't answer, and the riddlers that fail will be put to death. Simple Juan asks the successful riddle, and an attempt is made to bribe him for the answer. From a collection suitable for elementary age children.

Bible. Old Testament. Judges 14

The biblical Samson marries a young Philistine woman. At the wedding feast he opens a contest with this riddle:

Out of the eater, something to eat;
Out of the strong, something sweet.

If the Philistines can't answer in three days, they must pay Samson a forfeit of 30 linen garments and 30 sets of clothes. They threaten Samson's wife to make her coax the explanation from him.

Briggs, Katharine M. "Farmer Gag's Clever Son." In A Dictionary of British Folk-tales in the English Language. Part A, Vol. 2. Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1970.
GR141 .B69

This short English tale tells of a landlord who comes to collect the rent. The farmer's son answers in such clever riddles that the landlord offers to forget the rent if the boy will:

Come to his house the next day at twelve; not before and not after, not coming straight down the road, nor across the field. The boy solves the riddle and saves the rent.

A Dictionary of British Folktales in the English Language is oriented toward the scholarly adult. However, many of the tales are suitable for telling to children.

_____. "The Life Saving Riddle I, II, & III." In A Dictionary of British Folk-tales in the English Language. Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1970. Part A, Vol. 2.
GR141 .B69

In each of these three brief tales, a prisoner condemned to death can save his or her life by proposing a riddle that the judge can't answer.

_____. "The Story of the Questions." In A Dictionary of British Folk-tales in the English Language. Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press,1970. Part A, Vol. 2.
GR141 .B69

The king threatens to confiscate a miller's property in a year and a day if the miller can't answer these questions: "What is the weight of the moon?" "How many stars in the sky?" and "What am I thinking?"

_____. "The Young Prince." In A Dictionary of British Folk-tales in the English Language. Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press,1970. Part A, Vol. 2.
GR141 .B69

An adult version of the tale where a princess must marry the suitor who can fool her with a riddle. Since she cannot answer the prince's riddle, she sends her serving maids to lie with the young prince's servant in order to obtain the riddle answer. When they are unsuccessful, the princess goes herself disguised as a maid. The prince recognizes her and substitutes himself for the servant. The next day he offers to release her from her obligation if she can answer this riddle:

Last night, Jack, the servant, shot three milk-white swans,
And the master-man, the master swan."

Courlander, Harold, ed. "Four riddles." In Ride with the Sun: An Anthology of Folktales and Stories from the United Nations. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1955.
GR25 C6 1955

In this tale from Pakistan, a king hears of a wise woodsman who can answer any riddle and sends a magician to test the woodsman's skill. The woodsman's four sons are unable to answer riddles and are turned into stones. When the woodman himself gives the correct answers, the sons return to normal form and the woodsman receives a bag of gold. This collection of folktales is suitable for all ages.

_____. "King John and the Abbot." In Ride with the Sun: An Anthology of Folktales and Stories from the United Nations. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1955.
GR25 C6 1955

In this English tale King John puts three questions to the wealthy abbot who must answer or die. The King asks:

What am I worth?
How soon I may ride the whole world about?
What am I thinking?

The abbot enlists a clever shepherd to help with the answers.

Courlander, Harold. "The Hidden Treasure of Khin: A Burmese Tale." In The Tiger's Whisker. New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1959.
J 398.2 C

A young man leaves his home village to work in the city. When he receives news that his father has died, he returns home to get his inheritance and discovers that his father has left him a 'riddle.' This tale comes from a collection that is suitable for all ages.

_____. "The Philosophers of King Darius." In The Tiger's Whiskers. New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1959.
J 398.2 C

The King of Persia gathers his wisemen together and offers a jeweled belt and a purse of gold to the man who can answer this riddle: What is the most powerful thing in life? Answers like "wine," "woman," and "wealth" are offered, but the last man gives the true answer.

Dorson, Richard. "Peter the Great and the Stonemason." In Folktales Told Around the World. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975.
GR15 .F63

Because of his clever riddle, a stonemason is invited to St. Petersburg by the Czar. At a state dinner, one of the Czar's jealous ministers punches his neighbor on the arm and says "Pass it on." Soon it is the stonemason's turn to punch the Czar, and he must save himself with a riddle. This tale will appeal to the elementary age child.

Foster, James Ralph, ed. "The Peasant's Wise Daughter." In Tales of Wit and Humor. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1955.
GR25 .F57

This version of was adapted from Grimms' Household Tales, ed. 1884. A wise young girl solves a difficult riddle and as a result marries the King. When she meddles in the royal business, the king sends her away. However, before she leaves he grants her one favor which she uses very cleverly. Although the collection is oriented toward adults, this story and others are suitable for all ages. No illustrations.

_____. "Three Questions." In Tales of Wit and Humor. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1955.
GR25 .F57

In this short humorous Basque tale the King asks the parish priest to answer three questions. The anxious priest seeks help from the miller, who, disguised as the priest, answers the riddles to his own benefit. No illustrations.

Grimm, Jacob and Wilhelm. "The Devil and His Grandmother." In The Complete Grimms' Fairy Tales. New York: Pantheon Books, 1972.
PT921 .G62 1972

Three deserting soldiers are captured by the devil disguised as a dragon. The devil gives them a magic whip which produces gold when the soldiers crack it. At the end of the seven years they must answer a riddle or belong to him. The devil's grandmother helps them find the solution. Suitable for all ages. No illustrations.

_____. "The Riddle." In The Complete Grimms' Fairy Tales. New York: Pantheon Books, 1972.
PT921 .G62 1972

A proud princess had makes known that she will marry any man who can tell a riddle she cannot solve in three days. A prince's travels enable him to ask a clever riddle. For two nights the princess sends her serving maids to get the answer from the prince, but his servant chases them away with rods. The third night, the princess goes herself and the prince pretends to sleep and tells her the answer. He holds onto her mantle as proof that she has cheated. For older children. No illustrations.

Hamilton, Virginia. "Manuel Had a Riddle." In The People Could Fly: American Black Folktales. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1985.
J 398.208 Ham

This folktale from the Cape Verde Islands is about a princess who asks riddles. Her father promises a fortune to the man with the right answer, but those who answer wrong will lose their heads. Twenty-five men die. Manuel is poor but smart and he takes a chance. An excellent, well-illustrated book of Afro-American folktales for children.

_____. "The Riddle Tale of Freedom." In The People Could Fly: American Black Folktales. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1985.
J 398.208 Ham

In this brief tale a slave asks his master a riddle that the master cannot answer, and thus, wins his freedom.

Hart, Donn Vorhis. Riddles in Filipino Folklore: An Anthropological Analysis. Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, 1964.

A very short tale about a young maid unable to choose between her three suitors. She asks a riddle:

Bone far from flesh,
Flesh far from bone,
Sweets of all flowers,
King of the Kings.

She will marry the young man who can answer correctly. One suitor seeks out a wise boy who helps him find the right answer. A scholarly book for adults. No illustrations.

Keely, H.H. and Christine Price. "The Queen's Test." Chap. in The City of the Dagger and Other Tales from Burma. London: Frederick Warne and Co. Ltd., 1971.
PZ8.1 K24 C13

Handsome young Pauk Kyaing slays the fierce dragon by following his tutor's proverbs. Now in order to save his own life and marry the beautiful queen, he must answer a riddle within three days. On his last day, as the gallows is being built, the crows tell his parents the answer. This book of Pauk's adventures is suitable for the upper elementary age child.

Leach, Maria. "The Riddle of the Sphinx." In Noodles, Nitwits, and Numskulls. Cleveland, Ohio: Collins World, 1961.
J 398 L

A short version of the Greek tale of Oedipus and the Sphinx suitably told for children.

_____. "Seven Sons." In Noodles, Nitwits, and Numskulls. Cleveland, Ohio: Collins World, 1961.
J 398 L

In this Ozark mountain story an old woman has seven sons who

get into trouble at the same time and are about to be hanged. The king will spare their lives only if the woman can spin a riddle that he can not answer. A woodpecker gives her a riddle idea.

_____. "Outriddling the Princess." In Noodles, Nitwits, and Numskulls. Cleveland, Ohio: Collins World, 1961.
J 398 L

A smart princess can answer any riddle and the king promises her hand to the man who can ask three riddles she can't answer. "Even if the man is a hundred years old?" asks the princess. The king responds that age doen't matter. After the princess spends a long and weary day answering many riddles, a young man arrives and answers her riddles with charm and wit. A clever story for children.

Potter, Beatrix. The Tale of Squirrel Nutkin. London: Frederick Warne, 1987.

Impertinent Nutkin keeps teasing the old owl with riddles. Finally the owl loses patience and puts the squirrel in his pocket. A clever tale for children with appealing illustrations.

Randolph, Vance, coll. "The Wise Man's Questions." In The Talking Turtle and Other Ozark Folk Tales. New York: Columbia University Press, 1957.
GR110 M77 R29 1957

Joe Mooney needs a job, but he must answer three questions in order to get it. His twin brother, Jack Mooney, goes in his place and gives the successful and humorous answers. Suitable for all ages. No illustrations.

Thompson Vivian L. Hawaiian Legends of Tricksters and Riddlers. New York: Holiday House, Inc., 1969.
PZ8.1 T37585

The twelve tales in this collection tell how seriously riddle competitions were taken in old Hawaii. The stories are based on the earliest recorded versions and should appeal to young readers.